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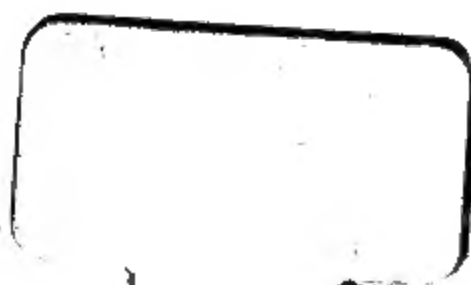
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v. 13

HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO THE

TERMINATION OF THE LATE WAR.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

**A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLAND,
IN PROSPERITY AND STRENGTH, TO THE
ACCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY.**

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ROBERT BISSET, LL. D.

AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF BURKE," &c. &c.

A NEW EDITION.

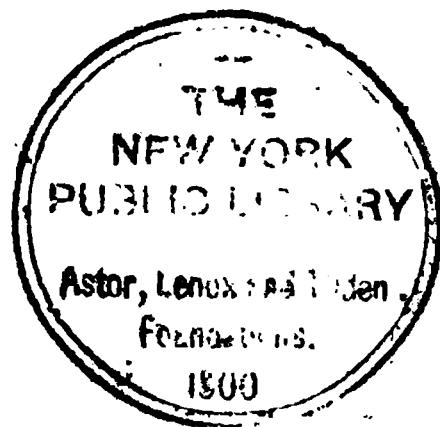
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HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

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XV.

1775.
Critical
state of
affairs in
America.

General
enthusiasm

guided by
prudence.

IN America, affairs were becoming every day more critical: provincial differences were giving way to common confederation, the resolutions of the congress became the political creed, and the people were preparing to act according to the directions of that body, and zeal and unanimity were generally prevalent among the colonists. Town and provincial meetings, colonial assemblies, grand juries, judges, and even private parties, all spoke the same language and breathed the same spirit: "we will not be taxed, but by our own consent; we will not receive the merchandise of that country which proposes such injustice; we will combine in defending our property, and resisting oppression." Accustomed to the gratifications derived from imported luxuries, the inhabitants of this rich and great commercial country resolutely relinquished all those indulgences: the pleasures of the table, elegance of dress, splendour of furniture, public diversions, the conveniences, ornaments, and relaxations of life, were sacrificed to one general sympathy; all ranks were inspired with an enthusiasm, which, from whatever cause it arises, and to whatever objects it is directed, never fails to be most powerful in its operation, and important in its effects. The merchant resigned the advantages of commerce; the farmer gave up the sale of his productions and the benefits of his industry; the mechanic, the manufacturer, the sailor, submitted to the privation of their usual means of subsistence, and trusted for a livelihood to the donations of the opulent, which, from the same sympathetic feelings, and conformity of opinions and determinations, were most liberally bestowed. It was not temperance that rejected luxury; it was not indolence that precluded commercial enterprise and professional effort; it was not generosity which made the rich munificent; or idleness or servility which made the poor seek subsistence from the gifts of the wealthy. All ordinary springs of action were absorbed by the love of liberty; and the enthusiastic ardour of the colonists was regulated and guided by prudence and firmness. While in most of the provinces they made preparations for hostility, should Britain persevere in coercive measures, they abstained from actual violence. It was hoped by many, that the petition

of congress to the throne would be attended with success; and also, that the address to the people of England would be productive of useful effects, and influence the deliberations of the new parliament. They did not, however, intermit their attention to warlike affairs; they exercised and trained the militia; and, as soon as advice was received of the proclamation issued in England to prevent the exportation of arms and ammunition to America, measures were speedily taken to remedy the defect. For this purpose, and to render themselves as independent as possible on foreigners for the supply of these essential articles, mills were erected, and manufactories formed, both at Philadelphia and Virginia,^p for making gunpowder, and encouragement was given in all the colonies to the fabrication of arms. It was in the northern provinces that hostilities commenced: when the proclamation concerning warlike stores was known in Rhode Island, the populace rising, seized on all the ordnance belonging to the crown in that province, amounting to forty pieces of cannon, which had been placed on batteries for defending the harbour, and these they removed into the country. Inquiry having been made by the governor concerning this procedure, the provincials did not hesitate to avow that their object was to prevent the cannon from falling into the hands of his majesty's forces, and that they intended to employ them against any power which should attempt molestation. The assembly of the province also passed resolutions for procuring arms and military stores, by every means and from every quarter in which they could be obtained, as well as for training and arming the inhabitants. In New Hampshire, hitherto moderate, the proclamation caused an insurrection; a great number of armed men assembled; and surprising a small fort called William and Mary, took possession of the ordnance and other military stores. Meanwhile the colonies anxiously waited for the king's speech, and the addresses of the new parliament; the tenour of which would in a great degree determine whether the British government meant coercion or conciliation. On the arrival of those papers, they produced the very effect which opposition had predicted. Instead of

^p See Stedman.

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Provincials
learn the
measures
of the new
parliament

intimidating the Americans, they impelled them to greater firmness, to a more close and general union. In proportion as government manifested itself earnest to force them to submission, the more resolved were they to resist that force: they considered Britain as attacking their rights and liberties, and these they determined to defend. The provincial conventions of the southern provinces now imitated those of the north, in passing resolutions for warlike preparations; which, before the arrival of the speech and addresses, had not been proposed by any of the middle or southern assemblies, but had been left to individuals. The provincial convention of Pennsylvania passed a resolution of the nature of a hostile manifesto; declaring their wish to see harmony restored between Britain and the colonies, but that if the humble and loyal petition of the congress to his majesty should be disregarded, and the British administration, instead of redressing grievances, were determined by force to effect a submission to the late arbitrary acts of parliament, in such a situation they held it their indispensable duty to resist that force, and at every hazard to defend the dearest privileges of America. Preparations were now making throughout the colonies for holding a general congress in the month of May; while in the intermediate time the provincial conventions continued to meet, in order to appoint delegates to the congress, direct and hasten military preparations, and encourage the spirit of resistance in the people.

Warlike
prepara-
tions.

BUT as the republican spirit of Massachusetts had from the beginning carried opposition to a much greater length than in the other colonies, so in this province actual hostilities first commenced. The provincial congress having met in February 1775, directed its chief attention to the acquisition of arms and warlike stores, by purchase, seizure, or any other means. Contributions were levied for defraying the expense of war like preparations. The most violent of the Bostonians had removed in to the country, to join the other colonists; but those who remained in the town, though less outrageous, were equally hostile: they greatly cooperated with their friends in the country, by communicating whatever they could discover of the

intentions of the British governor, and by this means became more instrumental in defeating his plans.

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GENERAL GAGE having received intelligence that some ordnance was deposited at Salem, on the 26th of February sent a detachment to bring the stores to Boston. The troops embarked on board a transport, and landing at Marblehead, proceeded to Salem; but the Americans having received information of the design, had removed the cannon. The commander of the detachment marched farther into the country, in hopes of overtaking the stores; but was stopt by a small river, over which there had been a drawbridge: this had been taken up by a multitude of people on the opposite shore, who alleged that it was private property, over which they had no right to pass without the consent of the owner. The officer, seeing a boat, resolved to make use of it for transporting his men; but a party of peasants jumped into the boat with axes, and cut holes through the bottom. A scuffle arose between them and the soldiers about the boat; a clergyman who had seen the whole transaction interposed, and having convinced the people that the pursuit of the cannon was now too late to be successful, prevailed on them to let down the bridge. The British troops passed: and, finding their object unattainable, returned to Boston.

1775.
General
Gage at-
tempts to
seize
stores:

DURING the spring, the provincial agents had collected a great quantity of stores, which were deposited at Concord, a town situated twenty miles from Boston. Informed of the magazine, general Gage sent a body of troops, late in the night of the 19th of April, to destroy these stores. The detachment consisted of the granadiers and light infantry of his army, and the marines, under the command of lieutenant colonel Smith and major Pitcairn, amounting to about nine hundred men. The troops took every precaution to prevent the provincials from being informed of their march; but they had not advanced many miles, before it was perceived, by the firing of guns and the ringing of bells, that the country was alarmed. Colonel Smith, finding that their destination was suspected, if not discovered, ordered the light infantry to march with all possible despatch to secure the bridges and different roads beyond Concord; and to intercept the stores, should

Detach-
ment sent
to Con-
cord;

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to Lexington.First hos-
tile conflict
between
Britain
and her
colonies.

they be attempted to be moved. These companies about five in the morning reached Lexington, fifteen miles from Boston, where they saw a body of provincial militia assembled on a green near the road. The Americans, before this time, had disclaimed all design of attacking the king's troops, professed to take up arms only for the purpose of self-defence, and avoided skirmishes with the British soldiers ; but on this day hostilities actually commenced, and here the first blood was shed in the contest between Britain and America. When the British troops approached, the Americans were questioned for what purpose they had met, and ordered to disperse ; on which the colonists immediately retired in confusion. Several guns were then fired upon the king's soldiers from a stone wall, and also from the meeting house and other buildings, by which one man was wounded, and a horse shot under major Pitcairn. Our soldiers returned the fire, killed some of the provincials, wounded others, and dispersed the rest. The Americans asserted, that the fire began on our side ; and, besides endeavouring to establish the assertion by testimony, argued from probability ; our light infantry consisted of six companies ; the militia assembled at Lexington, of only one company ; was it probable (they asked) that an inferior number of militia would attack a superior number of regular troops ? To this the obvious answer is, the indiscretion of an alleged act is not a proof that it was not committed, nor is it sufficient to overturn positive evidence. The British officers who were present, gave the account which general Gage reported in his letters to government,^q that the Americans fired first ; and on the testimony of several respectable gentlemen of unimpeached character, this assertion rests.

THE Americans being routed, the light infantry, who were now overtaken by the grenadiers, marched forward to Concord. A body of provincial militia being assembled upon a hill near the entrance of the town, the light infantry were ordered to drive them from that position, when the provincials were accordingly dislodged, and pursued to a bridge beyond the town ; but rallying on the other side,

^q London Gazette of June 10th, 1775.

a sharp action ensued, in which several of both parties were killed and wounded. Meanwhile the grenadiers destroyed the stores at Concord ; and the purpose of the expedition being accomplished, the light infantry were ordered to retire, and the whole detachment to march back to Boston. The provincials being by this time alarmed, assembled from all quarters, and posting themselves in ambuscade, among trees, in houses, and behind walls, harassed the British troops on the flank and rear. On their arrival at Lexington, the king's soldiers met lord Percy, who was advancing with a second detachment to support the first. The corps which had been at Concord, was so overcome with fatigue, that they were obliged to lie down for rest on the ground, while lord Percy formed his fresh troops into a square, which enclosed colonel Smith's party. The troops being refreshed, they proceeded on their march to Boston, still very much harrassed by the Americans, whose fire they could not return, as it issued from concealed situations, which they left as soon as their muskets had been discharged. They arrived at Boston late in the evening, quite exhausted ; the loss on each side amounted to about sixty killed and wounded. This first engagement demonstrated, that the Americans, though not inured to military discipline, possessed both courage and activity ; and, being well acquainted with the country, had skill to avail themselves of that advantage. The conflict also illustrated the species of warfare by which they could most successfully annoy the British soldiers. In open field, they could not, till better disciplined, meet us without certain loss ; but by ambuscade, harassing our marches and straitening our quarters, they were able to compensate their deficiency in a regular battle. Their own military state, and the nature of the country, dictated irregular operations, and the occurrences of this day exemplified the expediency of a cursory mode. The British troops, though consisting in all of two thousand men, being so pressed by those desultory assailants, farther proved, that the Americans were not altogether such contemptible warriors as the informers of government had represented, and the credulity of ministers and their supporters believed.

An American army
is raised.

THE Americans represented this march of the British troops back to Boston as a retreat, and themselves as having gained a victory; at the same time they declared hostilities to have been begun by the king's forces. Irritated by this conceived aggression, and by the reduction of their stores, and elated by their supposed success, their countrymen imagined that they could drive the royal army from Boston: they were further inflamed by a report, that one object of the expedition to Concord was to seize John Hancock already mentioned, and Samuel Adams, two leading characters in the provincial convention, and the latter a delegate to the general congress. The militia poured in from every quarter of the province, and formed a considerable army, with which they invested Boston. The army being in the field, the provincial congress passed regulations for arraying it, fixing the pay of the officers and soldiers, levying money, and establishing a paper currency to defray expenses, pledging at the same time the faith of the provinces for the payment of its notes. The congress farther resolved, that general Gage, by his late conduct, had utterly disqualified himself from acting in the province as governor, or in any other capacity, and that no obedience was due to him; but, on the contrary, that he was to be considered as an inveterate enemy. Thus they assumed both the legislative and executive authority: meanwhile they attempted to justify their conduct in an address to the people of Great Britain; to whom they presented their statement of the actions at Lexington and Concord. They still made great professions of loyalty, but would not (they said) tamely submit to persecution and tyranny; appealed to heaven for the justice of their cause, and declared that they were determined either to be free, or die. Their account of the contest at Lexington being rapidly spread through the other colonies, was received with unhesitating belief, and produced throughout the continent nearly the same effect as in their own province; stimulating resentment to hostility, and encouraging hopes of success. Similar resolutions were adopted by the other provinces, concerning the array of an army, the establishment of a revenue, and the civil administration of affairs. Lord North's conciliatory plan,

now arriving, was every where rejected, and increased their indignation. It was (they said) a weak attempt to disunite the colonies, and by detaching a part from the defence of their rights, to reduce the whole to such terms, as the British government thought proper to impose : they execrated the intention as tyrannical, but despised the design as inefficacious.

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SUCH was the American disposition of mind when the general congress assembled on the appointed day at Philadelphia; and the measures which they adopted, confirmed the provincial meetings in their resolutions and conduct. The influence of the sentiments and principles of Massachusetts Bay had been growing stronger in the other colonies, ever since the Boston port bill : in that province originated the general continental assembly, the confederacy of the association, the several addresses, and, in short, the chief resolutions of the congress of 1774. In the present session their first step was, to appoint Mr. Hancock, the most active instigator of Massachusetts, president. Their next measure was, to raise an army, and establish a paper currency, according to the model of Massachusetts. On these notes was inscribed, *The United Colonies*, as the security for realizing the nominal value of this currency. To retaliate upon Britain for the prohibitory act, they strictly prohibited the colonies from supplying the British fisheries with any kind of provision ; and, to render this order the more effectual, stopped all exportation to those settlements which still retained their obedience. They voted, that the compact between the crown and the people of Massachusetts Bay was dissolved by the violation of the charter of William and Mary ; and therefore recommended to the inhabitants of that province, to proceed to the establishment of a new government, by electing a governor, assistants, and a house of assembly, according to the powers contained in their original charter. They passed another resolution, that no order for money written by any officer of the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, should be received or negotiated, or supplies of any kind afforded either to land or sea forces in British service : they also erected a general post office at Philadelphia, to extend through the united colonies.

Second
meeting of
the gene-
ral con-
gress.

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Thus did the general congress assume all the powers of sovereign authority; they agreed on articles of perpetual union, by which they formed themselves into a federal republic for common defence, for the security of liberty and property, the safety of persons and families, and mutual and general welfare. Each colony was to regulate its constitution within its own limits, according to the determination of its convention; but whatever regarded federal security, welfare and prosperity, was to depend on the congress. This body was also to have the determination of peace and war, alliances, and arrangements for general commerce or currency. The congress was to appoint, for the executive government of the United States, a council of twelve from their own body, to hold offices for a limited time; and any of the colonies of North America, which had not joined the association, might become members of the confederacy, on agreeing to the conditions.

Spirit of
republican-
ism.

THESE were the leading institutions of a combination, which formed its system on principles evidently not monarchical. Several colonies had been loyal and attached to kingly government, though others were originally democratic; but now the measures of the British administration had amalgamated all their provincial differences into one mass of republicanism. The province of New York, disgusted at the disregard shown to their application to both houses of parliament, now entered into the colonial views with as much eagerness as their most ardent neighbours. Georgia also in a few weeks joined the confederacy; and thus from Nova Scotia to Florida there was one general determination to resist the claims of Great Britain.

Attempt
on Ticon-
deroga.

IN this month some private persons belonging to the back settlements of New York and Massachusetts, without any public command or even suggestion, undertook an expedition to Ticonderoga and Crown Point. The leader of this enterprise was an active adventurer, named Ethan Allen: this partisan, having been frequently at Ticonderoga, had observed a great want of discipline in the garrison, from which he inferred that it would be easy to take it by surprise. Having proceeded with secrecy and despatch, he captured the fort without any resistance, and im-

mediately after made himself master of Crown Point. These fortresses, by commanding lakes George and Champlain, and forming one of the gates of Canada, were of signal importance; but ministers having been so completely misinformed as to expect no military exertions from the Americans, had not thought it necessary to guard against their enterprises.

THE provincial forces now blockaded Boston by land; and the neighbouring countries refusing to supply the British with fresh provisions and vegetables by sea, they began to experience the inconveniences of a complete investment. These were increased by the number of inhabitants who still remained in the town, and whom the governor thought it expedient to retain as hostages. On the 25th of May, a considerable reinforcement arrived from Britain, under generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. Gage who since the formation of the American army had confined himself to defence, now judged his force sufficiently strong for offensive measures. As a preliminary step to the commencement of his movements, on the 12th of June he issued a proclamation, offering in his majesty's name a free pardon to those who should forthwith lay down their arms (John Hancock and Samuel Adams only excepted), and threatening with punishment all who delayed to avail themselves of the proffered mercy. By the same edict, martial law was declared to be in force in the province until peace and order should be so far restored, that justice might be again administered in the civil courts. This proclamation was not only disregarded by the provincials, but considered as the prelude to immediate action; dispositions were therefore made for hostilities.

THE town of Boston is situate upon a neck of land, projecting northeast into the ocean, and joined to the continent by a narrow isthmus, formed by the sea on the south, and Charles river on the north. Across the mouth of the river, northwest from Boston, is another neck of land, at the eastern extremity of which is situated Charlestown, somewhat more than a quarter of a mile over the frith from Boston. This is a spacious and well built town, and an advantageous post for either the attack or defence of the neighbouring city; it had hitherto been neglected, how-

CHAP. ever, by both parties. General Gage, perceiving hostilities inevitable, prepared to fortify this post. Informed of the governor's intention, the provincials resolved, if possible, to prevent its execution, by occupying it themselves. Between the isthmus and town of Charlestown, there is a rising ground called Bunker's hill, of gradual ascent from the country, but very steep on the side of the town, and near enough to Boston to be within cannon shot. This position the provincials resolved to seize and fortify; and to execute the design, a strong detachment marched from the camp at Cambridge, about nine in the evening of the 16th of June, which, passing silently to Charlestown neck, reached the top of Bunker's hill without being discovered. Having previously provided tools for intrenchment, they spent the night in throwing up works in front; and with such activity and despatch did they proceed, that before the morning their fortifications in many places were cannon proof. At break of day the alarm was given at Boston, and a cannonade began from a battery, the town, and the ships of war in the harbour. The provincials, nevertheless, went on with their works, and bore the fire with great firmness. About noon, general Gage sent a detachment over to the peninsula of Charlestown, under the command of major general Howe and brigadier general Pigot, with orders to drive the provincials from their works. The troops formed without opposition, as soon as they landed; but the generals perceiving the colonists to be strongly posted on the heights, already numerous, and additional troops pouring in to their aid, determined to send over for a reinforcement. A fresh detachment soon arriving, the whole body, consisting of more than two thousand men, moved on in two lines towards the enemy, having the light infantry on the right, and the grenadiers on the left. The Americans had their right wing near Charlestown, and were covered by a body of troops posted in that town, as well as by a redoubt which they had raised in the morning. The battle was begun by the British artillery, and soon became general. The British left wing was much annoyed by firing from the houses of Charlestown, and a very severe conflict took place in town. The main body of the provincials meanwhile

Battle of
Bunker's
hill.

1775.

received general Howe's division with great vigour, and kept up a close fire, which it required the utmost efforts of the regulars to withstand, and they could not avoid being thrown into some disorder; but rallying, and being encouraged by their officers, they returned to the charge with impetuosity, climbed up the steep hill in the face of the enemy's fire, and forced the intrenchments with fixed bayonets. General Pigot, after experiencing a gallant resistance, the town of Charlestown having been set on fire, succeeded in driving the enemy from their redoubt; and in the retreat the provincials sustained considerable loss, from the cannonade of floating batteries and ships of war in Boston harbour.

THOUGH in this engagement the British carried their point, they succeeded at a great expense, having lost more than half the detachment; two hundred and twenty-six were killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded; nineteen commissioned officers being included in the former, and seventy in the latter. Among the killed were, lieutenant colonel Abercrombie and major Pitcairn, officers of eminent respectability, and extremely lamented. The loss of the Americans, according to their own account, did not exceed four hundred and fifty. The plan of attack by the British has been blamed by some military critics, who have declared that the generals ought to have gone round to Cambridge, and commenced their attack from the western side of the hill, where it was easy of ascent; and that thus the Americans would not have been defended by their works, which were only raised opposite to Boston, and not round the whole hill; besides which, they might have cut off the retreat of the provincials, and compelled them to surrender at discretion. It was replied to these strictures, that the British themselves, by the proposed movement, would have been exposed to the main army of their antagonists, and hemmed in between that force and the detachment at Bunker's hill. The British were also blamed for not pursuing the retreating Americans, and defended on the same grounds as from the censure of the attacks: they might thus have exposed themselves

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1775.

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The pro-
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ton.

to a numerous body of fresh enemies. The battle of Bunker's hill was a new instance of the valour of British troops ; but in that respect proved no more than what had been uniformly experienced, and was therefore to be confidently expected. On the other hand, it evinced the valour of the Americans, who, though rough undisciplined peasants, had made so bold and obstinate a stand against regular troops, and demonstrated how inaccurately ministry had been informed, or how weakly they had reasoned, when they concluded that the colonists would not fight. The provincials, after the battle of Bunker's hill, fortified another hill opposite to it, and without the isthmus ; and thus enclosed the king's troops in the peninsula of Charlestown as well as Boston. The British claimed the honour of the victory, because they had driven the enemy from the field ; the Americans asserted that they were really successful, because, though dislodged from one post, they had blocked up the regulars, and by keeping them from offensive operations, frustrated the purpose for which they had been sent. The royal arms (they said) had been sent there for the purpose of reducing this province ; instead of effecting which, they were debarred by the provincials from every offensive operation.

THE general congress still continued to sit ; and having received Gage's proclamation, considering it as a hostile manifesto, they resolved to answer it by a counter manifesto, setting forth the causes and necessity of taking arms. This was a very masterly paper, and in point of ability equal to any public declaration recorded in diplomatic history. It enumerated, with clearness and plausibility, the alleged causes of the war, deduced the history of the American colonies from their first establishment, marked the principles of their settlements, and described their conduct to have been such as their principles required. It also sketched the policy of Britain in former times, and in the present ; the beneficial consequences which accrued to both parties from the one, and the baneful effects from the other ; repeated the grievances before stated ; and added new subjects of complaint, in the redress and hearing refused, and in the measures for subjugation adopted. After detailing those acts and

counsels, as being, together with antecedent proceedings, the causes of the war, and appealing to God and man for its justice, they specified the resources by which they should be able to carry it on with force and effect. They still professed to deprecate the continuance of hostilities; and, during this session, they drew up a petition to the king, praying that he would prevent the farther effusion of blood, and adopt some means for a change of measures respecting America. They also appealed in addresses to the people of Great Britain and Ireland.

WHATEVER might be their desire for peace, they were not only preparing for defensive war, but forming plans of offensive operations. They appointed George Washington, esq. (a gentleman of independent fortune in Virginia, who had acquired considerable experience and character during the preceding war,) commander in chief of the American forces; and nominated Artemus Ward, Charles Lee, Philip Schuyler, and Israel Pitcairn esqrs. to be major generals; and Horatio Gates, esq. adjutant general. Of these general officers, Lee and Gates were English gentlemen, who had acquired honour in the last war, and who, from disgust or principle, now joined the Americans; Ward and Pitcairn were of Massachusetts Bay, and Schuyler of New York. The congress also fixed and assigned the pay of both officers and soldiers; the latter of whom were much better provided for, than those upon our establishment. In July 1775, general Washington arrived at the camp before Boston, and all ranks vied in testifying attachment and respect for their new commander. The military spirit was very high throughout the continent; persons of family and fortune, who were not appointed officers, entered cheerfully as privates, and served with alacrity; even many of the younger quakers, forgetting their passive principles of forbearance and nonresistance, took up arms, formed themselves into companies at Philadelphia, and applied with the greatest labour and assiduity to acquire proficiency in the military exercise and discipline.

George Washington is appointed their commander in chief.

Boston continued to be blocked up during the whole year, and the British troops were greatly reduced by disease, and various evils incident to such a situation.

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The government had declared a resolution to subjugate the Americans if they did not submit, and the colonies not having yielded, government had made the attempt, proclaiming its assurance of success. The event was, that our troops, instead of making any progress in reducing the enemy, were shut up in a corner, and forced to remain in a state of inaction. Such was the result of the first campaign of Britain against Massachusetts Bay.

Project
and expe-
dition to
Canada.

THE congress began now to turn their eyes towards Canada. In that province, they knew the late acts were very unpopular, not only among the British settlers, but the French Canadians themselves, who having experienced the difference between a French and British constitution, gave the preference to the latter; and besides, having formed connexions with their fellow subjects, many of them adopted their sentiments. The Canadians were displeased with the neglect of the petition presented against an offensive law, and therefore the more readily disposed to favour associations against odious acts. The extraordinary powers placed in the hands of general Carleton, governor of Canada, by a late commission, were new and alarming, and appeared to the inhabitants evidently to demonstrate the purposes for which they were granted. By these he was authorized to embody and arm the Canadians, to march them out of the country for the subjugation of the other colonies, and to proceed even to capital punishment, in all places, against those whom he should deem rebels and opposers of the laws. As soon as British troops should arrive sufficient in number to enable them to act offensively, the colonists did not doubt that they would march down from behind upon the resisting provinces. He had also engaged a number of Indians, as the provincials supposed, with the same intent. To cooperate with the disaffected in Canada, and to anticipate the probable and suspected designs of general Carleton, they formed the bold project of invading his province. The scheme being adopted; its successful execution depended chiefly on the celerity of movement; while the British troops were cooped up at Boston, and before reinforcements could arrive from England. The advantages gained by Ethan Allen greatly facilitated the success of

Political
and milita-
ry reasons.

Montgo-
mery
heads the
expedition.

the enterprise. In August, three thousand men, commanded by generals Schuyler and Montgomery, marched to lake Champlain; which crossing in flatbottomed boats, they proceeded to St. Johns. Schuyler now falling sick, the command devolved upon general Montgomery. This gentleman, by birth an Irishman, and of a good family, had served in the seven years war with great reputation in America; after the peace, he had settled in that country, purchased an estate in New York, married a lady of that province, and from that time considered himself as an American. He was a great lover of liberty; and conceiving the Americans to be oppressed, and driven to resistance, he was induced by principle to quit the sweets of an easy fortune,* and the enjoyment of a loved philosophical rural life, with the highest domestic felicity, and to take an active share in all the dangers of war. Besides his skill in military affairs, he possessed in a high degree the important power of conciliating the affections of men: thus he easily recruited his troops and rendered them ardent in the execution of his designs. He detached the Indians from general Carleton's service, and having received some reinforcements from the artillery, prepared to besiege fort St. Johns, which was garrisoned by the seventh and twenty-sixth regiments, being nearly all the British troops in Canada.† The popularity of the cause and of the general procured the Americans supplies of provisions, and every other assistance which the Canadians could contribute to the advancement of the siege. The progress of Montgomery, however, was retarded by want of ammunition, and to supply this effect, he proposed to make himself master of fort Champlain, a small garrison, five miles from the scene of his operations, in which he understood a considerable quantity of ammunition was deposited. In the fort there were about one hundred and sixty men, commanded by major Stopford. Montgomery sent against the place three hundred men, with only two six pounders, and hardly any ammunition; they formed no regular battery, which would, indeed, have been useless to a force so scantily provided with artillery. It was expected that the garrison would have been able to hold out

His pro-
gress on
the lakes.

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 138.

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against such a siege, but it surrendered the 3d of November, on condition that they should be allowed to go out with the honours of war. It was much regretted, that the English commander had not destroyed the ammunition; as, falling into the hands of the Americans, it enabled them to proceed with more important operations. Meanwhile Ethan Allen, understanding that Montreal was in a very defenceless state, attempted to add this important place to his former conquests: and with a hundred and fifty men he crossed the river St. Lawrence, about three miles below Montreal; but the towns-people, being better disposed towards England than many of the other Canadians, joined the garrison, which did not exceed thirty-six men, and under major Campbell attacked and defeated Ethan Allen's detachment, and took the colonel himself prisoner.

COLONEL MACLAINE, a brave and experienced officer, a Scotch highlander by birth, prepared to raise a regiment of his countrymen, who had emigrated from the Western Isles to America, and had not obtained the settlements which they expected. Having collected about three hundred, he gave them the title of the Royal Highland Emigrants, and proceeded with them to Montreal, expecting to be joined by general Carleton, who intended to cross the river at that place, and march to the relief of St. Johns. The general arriving, found his whole force, including the party by which he was there joined, not to exceed a thousand men, and chiefly irregulars. With these having attempted to land on the south side of the river, he was encountered by a party of the provincials, who easily repulsed his forces, still more undisciplined than themselves, and disconcerted his whole project. The capture of fort Champlain on the 20th of October, greatly facilitated the siege of St. Johns, now deprived of all hopes of assistance from the governor of Canada. The American general having obtained plenty of ammunition, proceeded with such vigour, that in ten days he compelled the fort to surrender at discretion on the 2d of November. Montgomery lost no time in improving his advantage, but, crossing St. Lawrence, proceeded to Montreal, which being incapable of defence against the American force, the

He enters
Canada,
and cap-
tures Mon-
treal.

general evacuated it, and retired to Quebec. The Americans, finding Montreal defenceless, when the inhabitants offered to capitulate, answered, that from their situation they could not, as enemies, have any title to expect a capitulation; that, however, the Americans had not come to Canada as enemies, but as friends; on that ground, he pledged himself to protect them in the enjoyment of their rights, conformably to the British constitution before its violation by the Canada act, and promised to burden them as little as possible. Montgomery's moderate proceedings increased his popularity among the Canadians. Having taken possession of Montreal, he made dispositions for advancing to besiege the capital of Canada, and there were several circumstances favourable to his hopes of success. The works of the town had been greatly neglected from the time of the peace; as, by the cessions of France, no enemy was conceived to be in the vicinity. The garrison did not consist of above eleven hundred men, of which very few were regulars; and the greater number of the inhabitants were ill affected to the framers of their new constitution. General Carleton, though of high military reputation, was by no means conciliating in his manners; his social attention was almost solely bestowed on the Canadian noblesse, without extending to the much more numerous and more truly important class of commoners, and he was considered as the principal instigator of the ministry to the measures which they had proposed for governing that province.

WHILE the British governor, with these disadvantages, undertook to defend Quebec against Montgomery, an attempt was made from another quarter, to take that city by surprise. Col. Arnold, having a command under Washington before Boston, submitted to the general a plan of attacking Quebec by a route hitherto untried, and deemed impracticable. The river Kennebec reaches from the sea as far as the lake of St. Peter, at no great distance from Quebec. The colonel proposed to proceed by sea to the mouth of this river in New Hampshire, with one thousand five hundred men; to sail up the river, which is navigable to near its source; and penetrating through the forests and hills which constitute the frontier of New

March of
Arnold
across the
country.

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He arrives
opposite to
Quebec.

England and Canada, to come upon Quebec on a side on which it could not possibly expect to be attacked. Washington approving of the plan, Arnold speedily set sail with his troops. Their difficulties in the river, which is full of rocks and shoals, were extremely great, but their fortitude and perseverance were still greater. In some places the navigation was so hazardous, that they were obliged to come on shore, and carry their boats and rafts on their backs. Having by their intrepidity and perseverance, notwithstanding these obstacles, arrived at the end of the watercourse, they had still other difficulties to surmount by land. The forests which they had to traverse, were filled with swamps; the hills which they must cross, were steep and rugged; their provisions began to fail; which, together with the fatigue that they had endured, produced distempers.^t A third part of the detachment deserted, with a colonel at its head; but Arnold, neither dispirited by this desertion, nor by the distempers under which the remainder of the troops laboured, left the sick behind, marched on, and on the 9th of November, six weeks after his departure from Boston, arrived on the banks of St. Lawrence opposite to Quebec, and there pitched his camp on a spot called Point Levy. The Canadians received the Americans here with the same good will that Montgomery's corps had experienced in the neighbourhood of Montreal; they supplied them liberally with provisions and necessaries, and rendered them every other assistance in their power. Arnold immediately published an address to the people, signed by general Washington, of the same nature with that which had been before issued by Schuyler and Montgomery. Fortunately, when Arnold arrived on the banks of the river, the boats had been removed, so that he could not immediately cross; and thus was he prevented from accomplishing his purpose of taking the place by surprise. Before he had time to provide boats and rafts, the city was alarmed, and this delay saved Quebec. Having no artillery, Arnold was not prepared for a siege; he, however, attacked one of the gates, and was repulsed with great slaughter. Seeing

^t Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 138.

the impracticability of taking the town without cannon, he crossed the river and occupied his former position, determined to remain there, where he could intercept supplies and communication, until Montgomery should arrive from Montreal. Montgomery, after the capture of that place, employed himself in constructing flat boats; and the British armament, consisting of eleven armed vessels, on board of which were general Prescott, and some other officers of rank, together with a large quantity of military stores, was obliged to surrender to his victorious arms.

THE American general having on the 5th of December joined Arnold, appeared before Quebec, and immediately sent a summons to Carleton to surrender. The British general treated this demand with contempt, and refused to hold any correspondence with a rebel. The American commanders, who were still very slenderly provided with artillery, rested their chief hopes of intimidating the garrison by the appearance of their united forces, and on the cooperation of the disaffected inhabitants. In both these expectations, however, they found themselves disappointed: the garrison resolved to defend itself to the last extremity; and the most powerful inhabitants having a large property in the city, however ill affected towards Britain, seeing that by the admission of the colonists their effects would be in danger, and that therefore it was their interest to defend the city, were no less anxious than the most loyal friends of government to prevent it from being taken, and to stimulate the efforts of the rest of the citizens, with whom, from their situation, their influence was great. Between the British troops and the inhabitants of Quebec, ill disposed as they reciprocally were, and different as were their motives, there prevailed as perfect and effective an unanimity of counsels and exertions, as if they had been actuated by the same spirit. The American commander unprepared for a regular siege, at a season of the year so inimical to encampments in those cold and tempestuous regions, had no alternative, but either to desist from the attempt, or to take the city by storm. To tarnish by retreat the brilliancy of the first campaign, hitherto so auspicious, military glory forbade; policy dictated, that nothing should be left undone to maintain the public ardour, at present

His junction with Montgomery.

Siege of Quebec.

Efforts for its defence.

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Attempt to
storm it.Montgo-
mery is
killed.

glowing from success ; and many of the troops threatened to leave the general, if he did not try to accomplish the chief object of the expedition. All these reasons determined Montgomery to make the attack, though he was fully aware of the difficulties. The measure was no doubt adventurous ; but it was probably one of those hazards which must be incurred, in situations in which defeat, after an arduous struggle, is immediately less dishonourable, and ultimately less prejudicial, than the abandonment of an object without contest. Whatever may be thought of the general's determination to attempt a storm, there was but one opinion concerning the dispositions which he made for attack ; these were by all military judges allowed to be skilful and masterly. The plan was, to make four assaults : two false, by Cape Diamond and John's Gate ; and two real, under Cape Diamond, by Drummond's wharf and the Potash. These operations were to be begun on the 31st of December, at break of day ; but by some mistake, an alarm was given before the real attacks commenced, so that the false assaults did not produce the intended diversion. Montgomery headed one of the real attacks and, Arnold the other. Montgomery, with nine hundred men, had to pass through a narrow defile between two fires : he led his men, however, with the greatest coolness and intrepidity ; he passed the first barrier, attended by a few of his bravest officers and men, and marched boldly at the head of the detachment to attack the second : this barricade was much stronger than the first ; several cannon were there planted, loaded with grape shot, accompanied with a well supported discharge of musketry. From one of these, an end was put to the hopes of America in the gallant Montgomery. The general was among the first that fell, and with him his aid-de-camp and several other gallant officers. The Americans, deprived of their gallant leader, made a short pause, but did not retreat. They continued the attack for a considerable time with courage and firmness ; but finding their efforts ineffectual, they retired. Arnold, in his part of the attack, was at first successful ; he took possession of the lower town, but being wounded, was obliged to retire from battle. The next in command supplied his place with intrepidity and skill ; but the gar-

nison, being now freed from the other part of the assailants, turned their whole force against Arnold's troops, and, after an obstinate resistance, drove them away from the town with great loss.

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THE death of Montgomery was more regretted by the Americans, than the repulse from Quebec: during his command, he had displayed such skill and abilities, as proved him to be fit for any military service in which he might be employed. Great in his designs, fertile in resources, skilful in plans, cool and intrepid in action, he commanded the admiration both of those for whom and against whom he fought: an engaging disposition, benevolent affection, and agreeable conversation, rendered him at once beloved and esteemed by all those with whom he conversed; and even those who considered him as the champion of rebellion, bore testimony of his virtues. Colonel Arnold, being thus disappointed in his endeavours against Quebec, resolved nevertheless to continue in the province, and encamped on the heights of Abraham, where he fortified himself, and put his troops in such a situation as to be still formidable. Thus closed the campaign in the northern part of British America, in which the colonists, though they did not obtain the whole of their object, yet made great progress; and what was of still greater consequence, displayed such courage, enterprise, and skill, as demonstrated that ministers, in concluding that the provincials would be easily and speedily coerced, had formed their judgment on very erroneous grounds.

The siege
is raised.

IN the southern colonies, though regular hostilities did not begin this year, yet there was the strongest evidence that they were fast approaching. In Virginia, a long course of jealousy, distrust, suspicion, and contention, between the governor and the governed, terminated in open violence. The Virginians, who, before the act of 1774, the votaries of monarchical principles, had been loyal, and much attached to lord Dunmore their governor, were now become as forward as their neighbours in acts of combined resistance. There were, however, many loyalists in the province; and it might have been easier, through their means, by soothing the disaffected, to detach Vir-

Proceed-
ings in the
south;

of lord
Dunmore
in Virginia.

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ginia from the provincial concert, than most of the other colonies. Their governor, however, though a valiant soldier, did not possess all the qualities requisite in such delicate circumstances. He was violent, unaccommodating, and precipitate; he had by no means that dexterity of address, which, by placing opposite parties against each other, could mould both to his own purposes. Bold and active in exertion, he was impolitically open in the means which he employed: by abstaining from extremities, he might have amused the votaries of resistance, until he had established concert among the numerous loyalists. He certainly took the most direct, but not the easiest and safest road, and did not arrive at the destined end. Lord Dunmore, at the beginning of the disturbances, had transmitted to the British government an account of the condition of this province. This statement represented the planters as incumbered with debts, for the extrication from which, they were desirous of rebellion. This account, having by some means become known, added particular resentment against the governor, to the general causes which induced the people to oppose the government. Public meetings and military associations were universally encouraged, and the first were very prevalent. His lordship now received the conciliatory propositions from England, which he laid before the council of Virginia: that body acceded to those offers; but the assembly unanimously refused their concurrence, and increased the military establishment. The governor removed from the public magazine at Williamsburgh, a large quantity of gunpowder; and an armed force, commanded by Mr. Henry, a popular leader, attempted to compel a restitution of the powder to its former place: but they were quieted for a time by the agreement of the receiver general to be responsible for the repayment. Meanwhile intelligence was conveyed to the governor, that some of the enraged planters had formed a design on his life; and, on receiving this information, Dunmore retired with his family on board one of his majesty's ships. Application was made by the assembly for his return, to give his assent to several bills, to replace the gunpowder which he had removed from the magazine, and deposit an additional quantity of

military stores for the use of the colony. He answered, that he could not return, unless they dissolved all illegal meetings, refrained from illegal acts, and accepted the terms proposed by parliament. The assembly, receiving this determination, entered the following resolution on their journals: that their rights and privileges had been invaded; that the constitution of the colony was endangered; and that preparations ought to be made accordingly. The assembly having broken up, and the members retired to their country seats, the governor ventured to come on shore, to a farm belonging to him on the river near Williamsburgh, where he received intelligence that a party of riflemen were on their march to seize his person; he therefore immediately retreated to boats that waited for him by the bank. The provincial party fired several shot, but at too great a distance to do any material injury. Lord Dunmore, concluding that moderate measures would not answer the purposes of government, resolved to employ very different counsels. The convention of the colony having met, took into consideration the arms, discipline, and pay of the soldiers, and adopted various resolutions, on the model that had been framed by Massachusetts Bay and the congress. Finding his province in what he thought a state of rebellion, his lordship determined to act with more rigorous severity: he issued a proclamation, declaring martial law to be in force throughout the colony: and, erected the royal standard, to which he commanded his majesty's subjects to repair. More zealous in his intention to promote the interests of his country, than discriminating and moderate in his policy, he projected a scheme of very questionable wisdom;—to allure, by the offer of freedom, negro slaves, of whom there were great numbers in the southern colonies, to embrace the royal cause, by rising against their masters. Even well wishers to British government censured this proposition, as tending to loosen the bands of society, to destroy domestic security, and instigate savages to the most atrocious barbarities. By putting arms into such hands, the friends as well as the enemies of government would suffer; the negroes neither would nor could distinguish between the well or ill affected, and would involve all the

Scheme of lord Dunmore to excite negro slaves against their masters.

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whites within their power in a promiscuous massacre. The Virginians, when this proclamation was issued, were driven to the most furious resentment, and thenceforward set no bounds to their enmity. The project had the same fate with many of the compulsory schemes of government, causing violent irritation, without affording adequate benefit. He had already secured the possession of all the country situated between Norfolk and the sea; when the provincial meeting, in order to prevent the desertion of the slaves, and to arrest the career of the British governor, resolved to send against him a considerable force. About the beginning of November, a detachment, consisting of one thousand loyalists, was despatched from the western side of Virginia to Norfolk, in the neighbourhood of which they arrived early in December. The river Elizabeth divided them from the town; they attempted to pass it, but were repressed by a strong body of provincials, who were posted on the opposite side. More bold than prudent, Dunmore attempted to dislodge them from their intrenchments, but was repulsed: the English abandoned their position, and their commander, with the loyalists, retired on board the ships.

Connelly's
project.

In the back settlements, many of the Americans, knowing little of the proceedings on the coasts, were strongly attached to the British government. Mr. Connelly, a native of the interior part of Pennsylvania, proposed to lord Dunmore, to invade Virginia, and other southern colonies, with parties of loyalists from the inland country, that he might acquire the cooperation of the Indians, and of the slaves stimulated against their masters. His lordship approved of the design; but Mr. Connelly, having set out to carry it into execution, was seized on his way; and his papers being read, the whole scheme was discovered and overthrown, and Mr. Connelly sent prisoner to Philadelphia.

Maryland.
The Carolinas.

MR. MARTIN and lord William Campbell, respectively governors of North and South Carolina, having adopted similar plans of exciting the negroes to insurrection, and calling down the back settlers, were obliged to leave their governments, and retire on board ships of war.

His majesty having; soon after the battle of 'Bunker's Hill, published a proclamation for suppressing rebellion, and prohibiting correspondence between his British subjects and American rebels, the congress, in a counter-manifesto, denied the charges, and declared in the name of the people of the united colonies, that punishment inflicted by their enemies upon any person, for favouring, aiding, or abetting the cause of American liberty, should be retaliated in the same kind and degree on the favourers and supporters of ministerial oppression: thus congress, advancing progressively in assumption of authority, now professed to treat the government of Great Britain on a footing of equality. So far were the predictions of ministers from being fulfilled, and their objects effected throughout America, by the civil and military operations of one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five.

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1775.

Farther
proceed-
ings of the
congress.

Result of
1775.

CHAP. XVI.

Britain.—Majority favourable to the ministerial system.—Minister's dexterity in managing parliament.—The wisest opposers of war waive the question of right, and argue from expediency.—Not a war of ministers or parliament only, but of the people.—Apprehension of Mr. Sayre for high treason—inconsistent and defective evidence—the accused is discharged.—Meeting of parliament.—The king's speech.—General view of ministerial and opposition reasonings, motives and proceedings.—Employment of Hanoverian troops in British garrisons.—Inquiry into the last campaign.—Military members of opposition declare the force inadequate.—Militia bill.—Examination of Mr. Penn, respecting the dispositions and force of the Americans.—His testimony disregarded by the majority in parliament.—Mr. Burke's conciliatory bill, on the constitutional principle of granting taxes only by the people or their representatives—rejected.—Lord North's prohibitory bill—passed into a law.—Different departments of Messrs. Burke and Fox in opposition.—Petition from Nova Scotia.—Discussion of the employment of Irish troops for the service of the king in America.—Mr. Fox's proposed inquiry into the ill success of his majesty's arms—rejected.—Lord North, desirous of pleasing both parties, satisfies neither.—Supposed not entirely to approve the coercive system.—Subsidy to German princes.—Last effort of the duke of Grafton for conciliation.—Ministers assure parliament that another campaign will crush the revolt.—Supplies.—Ways and means.—Scotch militia bill—rejected.—Session closes.

CHAP.
XVI.

1775.
Britain.

IN Britain there was a great majority favourable to the ministerial system, who deemed the Americans rebels against lawful authority, traitors, and cowards ; and that coercion, therefore, was both just and expedient :

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1775.

Majority
favourable
to the mi-
nisterial
system.

those who vindicated their resistance were termed level-
lers, Cromwelians, republicans, and enemies to their king
and country." Many persons conceived, as formerly, that
the chief object of government was to raise a revenue
from America, which would reduce the land tax. In
their estimate they overlooked the probable expense of
the contest, and the likelihood that, on a balance of ac-
counts, there would be a great deduction from the revenue to
be thus acquired. The loss of the American commerce
was not immediately felt to nearly the full extent; consi-
derable remittances had been received before the ports
were shut up, especially in corn, which, there being at
this season a scarcity in Britain, was a very valuable arti-
cle. The peace between Russia and Turkey occasioned
an unusual demand for goods, so that in some quarters
trade was brisker than in former years. The diminution
of the American commerce had not yet generally produced
its effects, and great numbers of merchants were not hinder-
ed from joining in commendation of the ministerial system.

Whatever might be the wisdom which lord North
exerted in administering the important concerns of the
kingdom, he employed great dexterity in managing parlia-
ment. He was peculiarly skilful in addressing himself to
the opinions, prejudices, and passions of the country gen-
tlemen. Their approbation of the plan for taxing Ame-
rica had proceeded from self-interest overlooking the
means of its own promotion: they approved of coercing
the colonies, in order to acquire revenue; and in their eager-
ness for that object, forgot the probable cost: many other
men of property were amused with the same idea; by
compelling the provincials to submit, the public burdens
would, they thought, be lightened, and *war with America*
diminish taxes. It was indeed a war not of the minister
only, nor even of the parliament, but of the nation. Ad-
dresses poured in from all quarters, expressing abhorrence
of the impious and unnatural rebellion, and the obstinacy
and wickedness of the colonists. If there were abhorrrers,
however, there were petitioners also: certain merchants
felt the discontinuance of intercourse very severely, in

A great
part of the
nation con-
ceive, that
war with
America
will im-
prove the
revenue.

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Distinction
of whig
and tory
revived.

the reduction of their trade, and the interruption of their payments ; and various addresses were presented to his majesty from commercial and manufacturing towns and bodies : some of these were expressed in very strong terms, but the remonstrance of the city of London far exceeded others in severity. The discussion of the American contest revived the distinction of whigs and tories ; some, professing themselves of the former class, exclaimed against the opposers of parliamentary authority, as a deviation from the doctrine and practice of whigs ; who, inimical to the extension of kingly prerogative, were the supporters of parliamentary privilege. Others replied, that the essence of whig principles consisted in resisting arbitrary measures, and in supporting the rights of the people, whether they were attacked by one or many. If (said they) parliaments destroy the liberty of subjects in America, they can no longer be supported by whigs : by seizing their property without their own consent, and depriving them of trial by their peers, they take from the colonists the most valuable blessings of liberty. Polemical discussion as usual ran to extremes ; the reasoning of the tories favoured despotic power ; the arguments of the whigs verged to republicanism. On viewing the reasonings for and against the right of taxation, as they are contained in the parliamentary debates and political treatises of the times, a reader may perceive a very striking difference. The supporters chiefly argued from alleged instances, the opponents from general principles. The promoters pointed out certain cases in which British subjects were taxed without their own consent ; whereas their adversaries contended it was a fundamental rule of the British constitution, that no supply should be granted, but by the people or their delegates ; that the exceptions confirmed the principle ; and that if certain individuals or classes submitted to be under the exception, others were under no obligation to follow their example. The Americans, said ministers and their advocates, are as much represented as the many inhabitants of Britain who have no vote at the election of members of parliament. To this argument two answers were returned ; first, that every Briton is virtually represented, since the laws that bind

king, and also the legislators: secondly, the premises were admitted, that representation is partial and imperfect in Britain, but not the conclusion, that, because within this realm many without being represented paid taxes; therefore the Americans were bound to do the same. The wisest and ablest of the anti-ministerialists dwelt less upon the abstract question of taxation by themselves or their representatives essential to constitute a free people: they insisted chiefly on expediency: we had gained much, and might gain more, from the increasing prosperity of the Americans, without taxation; we were losing much, and likely to lose a great deal more, by the attempt to extort a revenue; it was our interest to return to the policy which produced gain, and abandon the counsel which produced loss. Whatever were the arguments against coercive measures, the balance of numbers was greatly on the side of ministry; and as far as a government is justified in its measures by a conformity to the inclinations of the majority of the governed, so far were ministry justified in their coercive system: the people might have been misinformed and deluded; acts might have been used by ministerial agents to misrepresent the enemy, and the purposes of hostility; but, if afterwards, taught by experience, the people should change their opinion, and censure those who allured them to the war, ministers could fairly answer, "It is your act: why do you blame us for going on with what your addresses and encouragement induced us to begin?"

The wisest opponents argue less from right than expediency.

Not a war of ministers, of parliament only, but of the people.

When the nation was generally favourable to ministerial measures, and inimical to the Americans, an incident happened, which concerned a personage dear to every worthy Briton of all parties, and alarmed both the supporters and opponents of government. There was in London a banker of the name of Sayre, an American by birth, and commercially connected with the colonies. A gazette announced, that this gentleman was committed to the Tower for high treason; and the grounds being unknown, the notification produced a great number of reports, which was eagerly swallowed and spread by public credulity. It was said, that Mr. Sayre had formed a design of seizing the king at noon day on his way to the house, ransoming him out

Apprehension of Sayre for high treason,

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1775.

Inconsistent and defective evidence.

The accused is discharged.

Meeting of parliament.
The king's speech.

of the kingdom, taking possession of the Tower of London, and overturning the present government. To effect these purposes, he had bribed two of the soldiers of the guards, who each engaged to gain a file of privates. This party was to carry their schemes into effect, in the face of all the other soldiers who had not been bribed. The evidence for the charge was Mr. Richardson, adjutant in the guards, who declared on oath that Mr. Sayre had signified to him such intentions. Mr. Sayre admitted that he had conversed with this man very freely concerning the destructive contest between Great Britain and America, and affirmed that there was not spirit in the country to effect a change of men and measures, but denied that he ever had thought of such a plan, or expressed himself to the purport averred by Mr. Richardson; that if there had been any such plot, the informer should have waited until it was farther advanced; since, if real, he must have been furnished with many corroborating circumstances. It was answered on the part of lord Rochford, who had committed him, that the folly of an imputed design, or of the conduct of its discoverer, is not sufficient to disprove positive evidence; and that whatever degree of credit he gave it in his private opinion, in an official capacity he was obliged to proceed upon the oath of a man whose character had not been impeached. Mr. Sayre was closely confined for five days; but being brought before lord Mansfield at the end of that time, the chief justice saw the inconsistency of the charge, and admitted him to bail, on very slight security to a man of fortune charged with a capital offence; the accused was bound for 500l. and two sureties for 250l. each. No prosecution was attempted; the bail was discharged. Mr. Sayre sued lord Rochford for illegal imprisonment, and recovered a thousand pounds.

On the 25th of October parliament met for the despatch of business. His majesty's speech, which was of considerable length, turned chiefly upon American affairs. He had called the houses together to deliberate concerning the colonists. Those who had endeavoured to inflame the Americans by misrepresentation, and by diffusing sentiments repugnant to their constitutional dependence, had at length succeeded in exciting them to revolt and hosti-

lity, which manifested themselves not only in preparations for war, but in actual rebellion. The authors of this desperate conspiracy had totally different intentions from the crown and parliament, from which they had hitherto derived signal advantage. The former designed to amuse this country with general professions of loyalty and attachment, while they had really nothing in view but the establishment of an independent empire. We proposed rather to undeceive, than to punish; therefore only small forces were sent, and propositions of a conciliatory nature accompanied the measures that were employed to enforce authority. The rebellious war was now become general; the object was too important, the spirit of the British nation too high, and the resources with which God had blessed her too numerous, to give up so many colonies, which she had planted with industry, nursed with tenderness, encouraged by many commercial advantages, and protected and defended at much expense of blood and treasure. Wisdom, and ultimately mercy, directed us to employ these resources, for vindicating our rights and honour. He had greatly augmented the army, and increased the navy; he had also assurance of succour from some foreign powers, and of general tranquillity from all. His majesty concluded his speech with declaring that he should appoint commissioners to grant pardons to such individuals or colonies as would return to their allegiance.

AN address was moved, conformable to the speech, in both houses. Ministers insisted, that the proposed system and measures only could be embraced with safety and honour to the British nation. If America should become independent, she would interfere with us in every quarter of the globe in our trade,* and in every other interest. The preservation of the blessings which were now enjoyed required us to keep America dependent on the mother country. The reduction of America might be difficult,

The address, and debate upon it.

x Dr. Adam Smith was at this time of so very different an opinion, that he thought England would gain much more by repealing the navigation act, which established the commercial dependence of America, than by retaining that monopoly. The event has justified the reasonings of that great philosopher: now that our monopoly is over, and that in the American market our sole trust is in the superiority of our commodities, our trade bears a greater proportion to the population and riches of America, than that which we enjoyed when she was fettered by the navigation act.

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1775.

General
view of
ministers
and opposi-
tion : rea-
sonings,
motives,
and pro-
ceedings.

but our resources were great ; we had conquered in many more arduous wars : the spirit of the British nation when roused, became proportionate to the difficulties and danger : shall we then be told (said the minister) that this people of yesterday, whose strength is the work of our own hands, can resist the powerful efforts of this nation. Coercion being, in the declared opinion of ministers, absolutely necessary to our glory and interest, our efforts, according to their predictions, were to be irresistible. In the commons, an amendment was proposed, expressing concern that the means used to allay and suppress the disorders in the colonies, had tended to increase, instead of diminishing, the disturbances ; thence it was inferred, that they were ill adapted to their end. Erroneous counsels and inefficacious conduct, manifested in the event, had resulted from the want of full and perfect information of the true state and condition of the colonies. Parliament ought to obtain the most thorough knowledge of facts, and, after considering these, to employ the maturest deliberation that they might discover effectual means for restoring order and tranquillity to the British empire. By an induction of facts, they established their positions, that ministers had either been wrongly informed themselves, or made false reports to parliament. Thus they were either weak in adopting momentous measures on inadequate information, or wicked in concealing that which they possessed. Mr. Fox contended, that affairs were not in the condition ministers represented, and that justified the predictions of opposition. With his usual power of simplification, he brought the question to three heads. First, What ought to have been done : on which proposition, he compressed the principal arguments that had been used by the opponents of government from the commencement of the contest. Secondly, What ministers said would be done : under which division, he refreshed their memories with an account of their high-toned professions and various promises during the same period. Under the third head, what was done : he exhibited a very clear and concise history of ministerial measures, and the actual operations in the transactions of the last two years. The erroneous information on which ministers, in spite of experience, had

relied and acted, were the false, partial, and illiberal representations of artful, designing, and interested men, who had held public offices in America. These had proposed to increase their own influence, emoluments, and authority, as well as to find the means of gratifying their petty prejudices and resentments, by extending the power of the crown to the injury of the people; and became at last so soured by opposition and the consequent disappointment of their schemes, that their sentiments were dictated only by malice and revenge. This uniform confidence in the testimony which they had so strong reasons to distrust, was totally inconsistent with just reasoning and policy. The assertion in the speech, that the colonies had aimed at independence, was strongly controverted from the whole and every part of their conduct. It has ever been our inclination to maintain that state of harmony with the parent country, which has continued from our first establishment to the present time. It is our interest to be subject to the British empire, as long as we are allowed the privileges of other subjects. Taxation without our own consent is a violation of these; therefore we will not be taxed without our own consent. The Americans had not aimed at independence; they had, after long deprecating, at last resisted unconstitutional usurpation. Opposition, aware of the motives by which many of the country gentlemen were induced to support the measures of government, exhorted them to consider the consequences before they supported it farther. They expected that their contributions were to be reduced by war with America, without adverting to the enormous expenses which ministerial plans would cause during the very first campaign. Had ministers laid before the house sufficient information to justify such measures? Had they not been themselves groping, and leading others in the dark? Were they always to run blindfolded into every destructive measure that was proposed? Would they, without examination and inquiry, still follow counsellors by whom they had been already so completely misled and deceived? Had they considered the difficulties attending the support of an army of 70,000 men on the other side of the Atlantic? Had they calculated how many thousand tons of ship-

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siderable share in determining their character. Lord Chatham, Messrs. Burke and Fox, advised government rather to conciliate, than compel the colonists: the admonition might be founded in misinformation, conjecture, and ignorance of the American character and of human nature. On this hypothesis, the more splendid the eloquence of such opponents, the greater praise is due to lords North, Sandwich, and Germaine, for totally disregarding their counsels. On the other hand, if the exhortations were founded in knowledge, experience, wisdom, or even common prudence, the strong and frequent repetition would enhance the blame of those to whom they were addressed in vain. I have therefore thought it necessary to exhibit this part of parliamentary history more fully than most other periods: the circumstances called for very great deliberative wisdom and executorial ability.

Employ-
ment of
Hanoveri-
an troops.

DESCENDING from the general survey of political principles, plans, and situations, which usually occupies the first meeting of a parliamentary session, to a more minute and detailed consideration of particular questions, opposition severely censured a measure alluded to in his majesty's speech, the introduction of Hanoverian troops into the garrisons of Minorca and Gibraltar; and motions were made in both houses, declaring that the scheme was totally inconsistent with the British constitution, and the bill of rights; that there was no standing army in Britain, but an annual force, subject to the mutiny act, which operated only for a year, and specified the number to be employed. Ministers asserted, that the bill of rights extended its prohibitions only to troops within the kingdom, and therefore did not apply to the present case; that the bill of rights made no difference between English and foreign troops, in its regulations for the direction of military force; and that the measure was justified on the grounds of expediency from the rebellious state of America. Many arguments were used, and precedents quoted in both houses; but the question was dismissed by the usual majority in favour of ministry.

Inquiry in-
to the late
campaign.

IN reviewing the events of the late campaign, some of the supporters of the ministers declared themselves dissatisfied with the operations and result, and lord North ac-

knowledge he had been disappointed in his expectations. He had formed his plans the last year, in the belief that the resistance would only be partial, and without apprehending a general concert of revolt. A great force, he now saw, was necessary, and such he proposed should be employed; and accordingly, very early in the season, he introduced the army estimates for the ensuing year. When these were laid before the house, opposition contended, that before they could judge of the expediency of the proposed establishment, they should receive accounts concerning the number and state of the troops now in America, and made a motion to that effect. To this proposition ministers objected, as unprecedented and inexpedient; it would expose the condition of our army, when the enemy might turn the knowledge of it to their own advantage and our detriment; therefore the motion was negatived, and the house proceeded to consider the estimates. Thirty-eight thousand men were proposed for the sea service, and fifty-five thousand for the land, twenty-five thousand of whom were to be employed in America. Military gentlemen of opposition^a insisted, that the supply was inadequate; and that if they must go to war, they ought to send a much more powerful force. Ministers insisted, that the destined army, supported by such a fleet as they were sending, would be sufficient for the purpose. In consequence of a passage in the king's speech concerning the internal defence of the country, a bill was brought into the house, by which his majesty was to have the power of calling out the militia, in case of a rebellion in any part of the empire. The bill was opposed, as changing the idea of a constitutional militia, making it dependent on the crown, and converting it into a regular army. It was represented to be part of the general system for rendering the crown totally independent of the people. Ministers argued, that the regular forces being sent abroad on necessary service, the employment of the militia was the only means of defending the country, without having resource to foreign troops. The king could not more unequivocally display the confidence he had in the zeal, affection, and

Military
members
of opposi-
tion de-
clare the
force in-
adequate.

Militia bill.

^a General Conway, and colonel Barre.

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loyalty of his people, than by trusting the guardianship of his crown and person, and government, to the militia of England. By contending that such a power might be abused, the gentlemen of opposition had only stated a possibility, to which every power was liable. Should the servants of the crown misemploy the force so intrusted to his majesty, there were remedies for that as for every other malversation. The law which merely empowered the king in times of emergency, to call on those to defend the kingdom who are most interested in its welfare, was in itself reasonable and equitable as well as prudent, and it imposed the duty on those who had the strongest motives to discharge it effectually.

AMONG the opposers of the ministerial system this year was the duke of Grafton, who, since his resignation of the office of prime minister, had been lord privy seal. He had, he said, supported the measures of 1774, from misapprehension of the real state of America; he had been led to believe, by false information and erroneous opinions, that the appearance of coercive measures was all that was requisite to establish a reconciliation. To real compulsion he had always been inimical, and now that he found it was intended by government, he could no longer support the measures; he was convinced that nothing less than a total repeal of the laws passed since 1763, would restore peace and happiness, and prevent the most destructive consequences. Resigning his office, he was succeeded by lord Dartmouth, who quitted the American secretaryship, and received the privy seal. The American department was now intrusted to lord George Germaine.^b This nobleman, after his retirement from military life, had devoted himself to political affairs; he was an acute reasoner, and a respectable speaker, distinguished for closeness of argument, precision, and neatness of language. He had been principally connected with Mr. Grenville, supported him when he was minister, and followed him into opposition. He had vindicated the supremacy of parliament, voted for the stamp act, and against its re-

^b Formerly Sackville; he changed his name for an estate that was bequeathed to him.

peal ; and had shown himself extremely inimical to the Grafton administration. From that circumstance, together with his reputed abilities, he was by many deemed the author of Junius. For several years after Mr. Grenville's death, he had continued in opposition ; but in 1773, he joined ministry in the East India affairs, and took a decided part in the coercive measures of 1774 and 1775. Lord Rochford resigning about the same time, was succeeded by lord Weymouth in the southern department.

A LITTLE before the meeting of parliament, the celebrated Mr. Penn presented to his majesty the petition of congress, and was told that no answer would be given. This affair was repeatedly mentioned in both houses, as affording a ground for conciliation, if properly regarded, and of reproach against ministers for their total neglect of such advances. A copy, of the petition having been laid before the house, the duke of Richmond, on the 7th of November, moved that Mr. Penn, whom he saw below the bar, should be examined, in order, he said, that the authenticity of the petition might be established before they proceeded to consider its contents. The ministerial lords were aware, that his grace's object extended far beyond the authenticity of the petition, and that he wished to lay before the house the knowledge which Mr. Penn was so fully qualified to give. It was carried that day, that he should not be examined ; but his grace having, on the 10th, pressed it in a different form, the lords in administration consented, on condition that only specified questions should be asked. The substance of this famous evidence was, that the witness did not believe the congress had formed any designs of independence ; the members composing that body had been fairly elected ; were men of character, capable of conveying the sense of America ; and had actually conveyed the sense of their constituents : the different provinces therefore would be governed by their decisions in all events. The war was begun, and carried on by the colonies, merely in defence of what they thought their liberties : the spirit of resistance was general, and they believed themselves able to defend their freedom against the arms of Britain. Inquiries of a more particular nature respecting Pennsylvania, produced answers

Examina-
tion of Mr.
Penn re-
specting
the disposi-
tions and
force of the
Americans.

which explained the force of that province to be about sixty thousand men able to carry arms, of whom twenty thousand served as volunteers, and that these consisted of men of property and character : they were furnished with the means of casting cannon in great abundance, and had a plentiful supply of small arms. The colonies were dissatisfied with the reception of their former petitions ; they trusted greatly to the petition which he carried, and which they styled the OLIVE BRANCH : in bearing this application, he was considered as the messenger of peace. Were it not to succeed, they would become desperate, and probably form connexions with foreign powers which might not easily be dissolved. The Americans wished for reconciliation with this country, and would acknowledge the supremacy of Britain in every thing except in exacting taxes. Mr. Penn was asked, whether the secretary of state had made any inquiries concerning America ? He answered, that none had been made.^c

MR. PENN having withdrawn, a motion was made by the duke of Richmond, that the petition from the continental congress to the king, was a ground for a conciliation of the unhappy differences at present subsisting between Great Britain and America. Besides repeating the arguments which had been so often discussed, he argued, that here was a declaration which demonstrated that the Americans wished for reconciliation, and desired no concession from us derogatory to the honour of the mother country. On the side of ministry it was contended, that to treat with the congress would be to acknowledge the legality of the assembly and its proceedings ; that the petition was an insidious and traiterous attempt to impose upon the king and parliament ; and that, while the authors held out smooth language and false professions, they were at the very instant, in their appeals to the people of Great Britain and Ireland, abusing the parliament, denying its authority, and endeavouring to involve the whole empire in rebellion and bloodshed, by inducing their fellow-subjects in these kingdoms to make one common cause with them,

^c Neglect or rejection of all information which did not favour their own views, was one of the chief and most uniform characteristics of lord North's administration.

1775.

His testi-
mony is
disregard-
ed by a
majority in
parlia-
ment.

in opposition to law and government : the evidence before the house was chargeable with partiality and prejudice, and deserved no regard. After a violent debate, the duke of Richmond's motion was negatived by a majority of eighty-six to thirty-three. On the thirteenth of November the house of commons having resolved itself into a committee of supply, the minister expatiated on the necessity of reducing the colonies, and expressed a fear that he must apply for the assistance of the landed proprietors, in an additional shilling to the land tax. Opposition observed, that this was a foretaste to the country gentlemen of the advantages which they would realise from the scheme of taxing America. Lord North now advanced a position, that taxation was only a secondary object, and that the supremacy of Britain was the principle ground of war ; on which remark some of his usual supporters began to express dissatisfaction. The dexterous versatility of the minister explained his meaning to be, that the idea of taxation, and of levying a productive revenue from America, was never abandoned, and that ministers merely intended its suspension. The dispute at present was of a much higher nature than it had been originally, and taxation was but an inferior consideration, when the supremacy of the legislative authority of this country was at stake. He would have them therefore perfectly understand, that whatever general terms the ministers might at any time make use of, taxation neither is, nor ever was, out of their view. As a further proof of his sincerity upon this subject, he declared that there were no means by which the legislative authority and commercial control of this country over the colonies could be ensured, but by combining them with taxation : the country gentlemen were convinced, and the motion was carried in the affirmative.

On the 16th of November, Mr. Burke introduced a new conciliatory bill, in which, instead of expediency, the ground of his arguments in the two preceding sessions, he founded his motion on the right of the subjects of this realm to grant or withhold all taxes, as recognized by the great financial statute passed in the reign of Edward the first, *statutum de tallagio non concedendo*. On this statute, he observed, rested the protection of property from

Concilia-
tory mo-
tion of
Burke.

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arbitrary invasion, a security which constituted one of the most striking differences between Britain and absolute governments. He demonstrated, that, on account of the immense distance, it was impracticable for the American subjects of Britain to enjoy this privilege by representation in parliament, and that therefore, to be on an equal footing with other British subjects, they should be taxed by their own assemblies. The necessity which occasioned Edward's statute to be framed, was similar to the exigency of the present times ; it originated in a dispute between that monarch and his people, relative to taxation. The latter was victorious, and obtained this important privilege, that no taxes should be imposed on them without the consent of the parliament. The present bill was intended to procure a similar advantage for the Americans ; on this account, waiving the consideration of the question of right, it renounced the exercise of taxation. Great Britain, however, reserved to herself the power of levying commercial duties, which were to be applied to those purposes that the general assembly of each province should deem most salutary and beneficial. The mother country also reserved to herself the power of assembling the colonies in congress. The bill then proposed to repeal all the laws of which the colonists complained, and to pass an immediate act of amnesty. The principal objections to the bill were, that it conceded too much for Britain, and not near enough to satisfy the Americans. It was also contended that, as a plan of accommodation had been already chalked out in the speech from the throne, it would be disrespectful to the king to adopt any other plan, until that had been tried. The discussion of this bill brought forward the most distinguished orators on both sides : when, on a division, experiencing the usual fate of anti-ministerial propositions, it was negatived by a great majority.

Bill for
prohibiting
trade and
intercourse
with Ame-
rica.

On the 20th of November, lord North introduced a bill for prohibiting all trade and intercourse with the thirteen colonies of America. It authorized the commanders of his majesty's ships of war to make prizes of the ships or goods belonging to the Americans, whether found on the high seas or in harbour, and vested the property in the captors. A clause was inserted, by which all Americans,

who should be taken on board the vessels belonging to that continent, were made liable to serve indiscriminately, without distinction of persons, as common sailors on board our ships of war, at the discretion of the commanding officer. Such colonists were to be entered upon the ship's books, and considered as volunteers; and being so entered, were to be set on shore in Great Britain or Ireland, or in any part of America not then in rebellion, and there to be liberated. As this prohibitory bill comprehended every species of the American commerce and employment upon the sea along the coast of the confederated states, all the former acts which affected any particular post, or any branch of commerce, were repealed, in which the Boston port and the fishery bills were included. While all were proscribed who refused unconditional submission, pardon was held out to those who returned to their duty, and commissioners were appointed for inquiring into the merits of individuals or colonies who should accept of the proffered mercy. Opposition displayed its formidable talents in showing that the proposed law amounted to a declaration of war, and drove the Americans to the alternative of absolute subjugation, or independence; that it would give the finishing blow to the separation of Britain from her colonies, farther ruin our African trade and the West Indies, and arrest remittances from the colonies for the liquidation of their great debts due to British merchants. While thus producing so much mischief to our plantations and mercantile interests, the Americans would be supplied from other markets; Britain would lose a great source of wealth, with little annoyance to the colonies, and to the gain of foreign nations. It was a ridiculous inconsistency to begin with declaring war and confiscating the effects of the Americans, and conclude with some fallacious provisions concerning peace. In defence of the bill, it was said, that the Americans were at war with us; that while hostilities continued, every means must be employed to distress our antagonists, as much as if we were acting against external enemies. Messrs. Wedderburne and Thurlow displayed great ingenuity in supporting these positions, and endeavoured to prove, that the inconveniences felt by the West Indian

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planters and British merchants were temporary, but that the permanent good would overbalance the evil. Petitions against the bill were presented, and disregarded: it was carried, however, through both houses by a great majority, and passed into a law. While the act was pending, Mr. Hartley proposed a conciliatory bill, similar in principle and object to that of Mr. Burke, though somewhat different in detail; but it met with the same fate.

Different
fields of
Mr Burke
and Mr.
Fox.

THE transcendent genius of Messrs. Burke and Fox, though exercised in every subject that came before parliament, had two different fields on which they respectively displayed their greatest excellence. The legislative plans proposed by opposition, projects of conciliation, and other schemes of deliberative policy, requiring the union of accurate and extensive detail, with confirmed habits of generalization, were most frequently the productions of Mr. Burke. Discussions of executorial plans, and concise inquiries concerning specific measures, requiring also energy of intellect, firmness and decision of temper, but without demanding such a compass of general knowledge, or at least equal habits of philosophic contemplation, came chiefly from Mr. Fox. Mr. Burke, watching over legislation, might be called the lawgiver, and Mr. Fox, over executive measures and conduct, the statesman of opposition. On the 22d of November, Mr. Fox moved for an account to be laid before the house of the expenses of the army in America, from August 1773 to August 1775. He said, that from these papers, he could demonstrate the delusion of ministers, and the waste of the public money, to have been astonishing. The expenses of the ordnance in particular in the year 1775, had been greater than in any of the duke of Marlborough's campaigns. Although every branch of the military service had been amply provided for by the minister's own acknowledgment, and according to his own appropriation to the respective services, a debt had been incurred in the single department of ordnance, amounting to two hundred and forty thousand pounds. When in a campaign of so little exertion the expenditure had been so great, what was to be expected from the operations of the ensuing year? Ministers opposed this motion, because, they said, several accounts were not received.

Mr. Fox obviated their objection, by confining his requisition to the papers which were in their possession ; but the ministerial party also controverted this proposition, and from their unwillingness to submit the accounts to the inspection of the house, Mr. Fox was afterwards doubly vigilant in his inquiries concerning public expenditure.

A PETITION, before the recess, was presented^d from Nova Scotia to each house of parliament, in consequence of lord North's conciliatory proposition ; which by its promoters was intended as a model for the rest of the colonies. It proposed a revenue to be raised among them, under the direction of parliament. This doctrine being extremely agreeable to ministry, they gave the petition a very favourable reception, though they knew the amount of the revenue must be very inconsiderable. The proposed mode of taxation was, the payment of a certain proportionable sum on the importation of foreign commodities, but that the rate of the duty should be first fixed by parliament. To this plan it was objected, that the revenue heretofore drawn from the provinces, every part of which, except the tea duty, had been submitted to, and chiefly paid, was more productive than the new duties proposed in lieu of them would be, in case this regulation was generally adopted : neither did it appear likely, that the opulent colonies should follow the example of a district which ever had been a considerable expense to government, and continued to require a yearly grant from parliament for its support. The minister at first supported the petition, and a motion founded upon it passed the committee ; but during the discussion, perceiving its inefficacy, he suffered it to be rejected.

Petition
from Nova
Scotia.

THOUGH the public measures and declarations of ministers expressed a determination to persevere in coercion and confident assurance of success, yet it is now known^e that, at the very time of their menacing protestations, they

Despondency of
ministers
amidst
their
threats.

^d See parliamentary Journals, Dec. 1, 1775.

^e From various sources, and especially from the writings of Gibbon, as we may see by the following extract from a letter, written the 18th of January 1776, during the christmas recess. " I think our meeting will be lively ; a spirited minority, and a desponding majority. The higher people are placed, the more gloomy are their countenances, the more melancholy their language. You may call this cowardice ; but I fear it rises from their knowledge (a late knowledge) of the difficulty and magnitude of the business.

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were really oppressed with fear and despondency; they appear, indeed, to have been waivering between the false shame that prevents the abandonment of projects which had been precipitately embraced, and sad forebodings of ultimate failure.

THE first business that engaged the house after the recess, was a measure of the government of Ireland; the lord lieutenant had sent a written message to the house of commons, requiring, in the king's name, four thousand additional troops from that kingdom for the American service, promising that their expense should not be defrayed on the Irish establishment, and offering to replace them by continental auxiliaries without any expense. The commons of Ireland granted the native forces required; but after a violent debate, leaving the ministerial party in the minority, they refused to admit foreign soldiers.

Discussion
of the em-
ployment
of Irish
troops for
the service
of the king
in Ame-
rica.

THE message proposing the employment of troops from and in Ireland without being paid by that country, obviously meant that they were to be paid by Great Britain; and was not without reason considered as an engagement by the crown, to dispose of British public money without the consent or knowledge of the British house of commons. On the 15th of February 1776, Mr. Thomas Townshend moved, that the lord lieutenant's message was a breach of the privilege of that house. The arguments by which he supported his motion were, the principles and practice of the British constitution concerning pecuniary grants, and the designs which such attempts intimated; he also mentioned, though only incidentally, the absurd extravagance of paying eight thousand men for the use of four thousand. The ministerial speakers did not all take the same ground; lord North declared, that though his majesty's servants in Britain had a general cooperation with his servants in Ireland, the former did not consider themselves as responsible for the conduct of the latter: he however justified the message on the ground of expediency, without closely discussing the right. Others supporting a higher tone of prerogative, insisted that the king had a right to introduce foreign troops into any part of his dominions whenever he deemed it expedient. Most members of opposition were not very strenuous in support of the motion, because

the scheme which it censured had not been put into execution ; and it was rejected therefore by a majority greater even than was usual.

1776.
Mr Fox's
proposed
inquiry in-
to the ill
success of
his majes-
ty's arms

MR. FOX's proposed inquiry concerning the ordnance, was only prelusive to a more comprehensive scrutiny. On the 2d of February he made a motion to inquire into the cause of the ill success of his majesty's arms in North America, as also into the causes of the defection of the Canadians. That he might give the greater effect to his present proposition, he avoided every extraneous subject ; he would neither (he said) consider the right, the expediency, or the practicability of coercing America, but, for the sake of argument, admitting them all, would simply inquire whether the measures and proceedings of ministry upon their own principles, had produced the desired and predicted effect : without now discussing the end, he should merely examine the fitness of the means. Beginning with the Boston port bill, as the commencement of determined coercion, he pursued an historical detail of the ministerial measures down to the present time. If, according to the hypothesis of ministers, coercion was practicable, either they had not planned efficient measures, and afforded the proper force, or they had intrusted its direction and conduct to incompetent officers : there had somewhere been incapacity, neglect, or misconduct. Whether the rapid extension of disaffection, the successes of the Americans, and the inefficiency of our troops, was owing to unfitness in one class of servants to deliberate and to determine, in another to execute, or to both, parliament ought to be informed. The country had given the minister the means of effectual effort, and had a right to explore the causes of the failure, and to know what ministers or military officers deserved, or did not deserve, farther employment. Ministers themselves, if conscious that no blame was justly imputable to them, were interested in promoting the desired scrutiny : they would rejoice at such an opportunity of vindicating their conduct to the public, and of convincing the people that our present national disgraces, misfortunes, and application of that support which they had so liberally given, were not owing to ministerial ignorance, incapacity, or want of integrity. He

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Lord North desirous of satisfying both parties, satisfies neither.

Supposed not satisfied with the coercive system.

Subsidy to German princes.

concluded with a position, that none wished to avoid inquiry, but those who were either culpable themselves, or wished to screen the culpability of others; an observation, doubtless, generally, but not universally, just. Mr. Fox urged these arguments with a force which could not be resisted by reasoning: what they were unable to combat, ministers endeavoured to elude. There appeared on the question, as on others before mentioned, a want of coincidence in the arguments of ministry and their friends. Lord North was less decisive in his opposition than many of his supporters, and very evidently showed a disposition to moderation, from which he was often recalled by his more violent coadjutors; he had rather betrayed than discovered a disposition to conciliate, instead of coercing, but had been prevented by the abettors of stronger measures. In discussions with opposition, he showed a similar disposition, rather to palliate than directly to controvert. From the great abilities of his lordship, it may be fairly inferred, that his indecision arose in some degree from doubts about the general wisdom of the plan which he was pursuing. It was by no means probable, that a man of lord North's talents, if thoroughly convinced that what he proposed was unobjectionable, would discover such hesitation. He admitted, that miscarriages had happened, but it was impossible to foresee every event; he was ready to resign his office, whenever the house should withdraw its confidence. Mr. Fox had charged administration with wickedness, ignorance and neglect; the first, he assured them, was wrong, and the two last remained to be proved. This vague, temporizing, and decisive reply to Mr. Fox's definite charges, if it did not prove, at least afforded grounds for forming an opinion, that lord North himself was not altogether satisfied with the part which he was acting. Others of much less ability were by far more decided in their opposition to an inquiry.

On the 29th of February, treaties between his majesty and the duke of Brunswic, also the landgrave of Hesse Cassel and the hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, were laid before parliament. By these agreements, four thousand three hundred Brunswic troops and twelve thousand Hessians were taken into British service. To the duke

of Brunswic an annual subsidy was to be paid, of fifteen thousand five hundred and nineteen pounds. For the Hessians a double rate was to be paid, amounting to one hundred and fourteen thousand two hundred and ninety-eight pounds. The levy money to both princes was seven pounds four shillings and four-pence per head; every man killed was to be charged at the rate of the levy money. All were to receive the same pay, ordinary and extraordinary, as British troops. The minister contended, that the supply was necessary, and that the terms were fair. Opposition reprobated the measure of hiring foreign mercenaries against British subjects; the motion, however, was carried by a great majority in both houses. The secretary at war having moved for a supply of 845,000*l.* for the extraordinaries of the army, this vast demand incurred in so short a time, and in so confined and inefficacious a service, roused all the vigour of opposition. Neither the campaign of 1704, which by discomfiting France delivered Europe; nor of 1760, which subdued North America; had cost near so much as 1775, which produced nothing but disgrace. Ministers rested their measures on the sanction of parliament; the misfortunes of the last campaign (they said) were owing to their belief that the Americans were not in general so wicked as they had actually proved, and from that conviction we had employed too small an army; but in the present campaign, the force which should be sent would totally reduce the colonies.

On the 14th of March, the last attempt was made to prevent war between the parent and the children. The duke of Grafton moved an address to his majesty, intreating, that to put an end to the effusion of blood, and to evince to the world the wish of the sovereign and the parliament to restore peace and tranquillity, he should issue a proclamation, declaring, if the revolted colonies would present to the commander in chief of his majesty's forces in America, or to the commissioners sent out with powers adequate to the purposes of making peace or war, a petition setting forth their grievances, hostilities should be immediately suspended, and the petition referred to the parliament, to be considered with the most solemn and

Last efforts
of the duke
of Grafton
for concili-
ation.

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Ministers
assure par-
liament
that ano-
ther cam-
paign will
crush the
Americans

serious attention. The great object of this motion seems to have been, to remedy the defects of the late prohibitory act: which, according to opposition, held out a delusive show of peace, without furnishing the means, or containing the powers, by which it could be effected. Besides the general arguments which this motion naturally suggested, its mover adduced a declaration of lord George Germaine in the other house, that nothing less than unconditional submission from America would satisfy Britain. To promote the address, his grace farther stated, that intelligence was received by himself that messengers had been sent by France to general Washington and the congress, and argued that this conciliatory proposition would prevent the Americans from seeking the means of defence in foreign assistance. Ministers contended, that conciliation was almost impracticable, and that nothing could more certainly prevent it than concession. An offer to admit them to amity on any other terms than those already proposed, would be a degradation to the honour of the king, the parliament, and the country. The Americans would be reduced in one campaign to accept of the terms which we were pleased to offer: France would not interfere in a dispute between us and our colonies. If she had any such intention, it would be an additional argument for employing our force to subjugate America, before she could be joined by so powerful an auxiliary. We have (they said) passed the Rubicon, and it is no longer time for us to be proposing conciliation. This was the language not of mere parrots of the political creeds that happened to be in vogue for the day, but of many senators of considerable talents and knowledge; some highly distinguished for ability, and one equal to most men that ever appeared in a legislative assembly. A reader, who should know the origin, principles, and history of the American war, without having attended to parliamentary debate and speeches, would learn with surprise, that a most strenuous abettor of coercive measures, a determined enemy to every plan of a conciliatory spirit, a supporter of unconditional submission, and a prophet of speedy subjugation, was lord Mansfield. Such powers of argument in cases of momentous importance, drawing conclusions from insufficient in-

formation and erroneous principles; such profound wisdom sanctioning the measures, decrees, and acts of misinformation, precipitancy, and violence; afford a striking instance of the weakness which, from the imperfection of human nature, is often intermingled with the most exalted qualities; it teaches the reasoner in drawing his inferences, and the counsellor in forming his schemes, not to place implicit reliance on either the authority or example of even an illustrious sage.

A BILL was this year proposed for establishing a militia in Scotland, which was eagerly patronized by members from that country, but strongly controverted by English senators. In favour of the bill it was argued, that the obvious utility of militia as a national defence, rendered its establishment as proper in Scotland as in England; and that the attachment now evinced by Scotchmen to the family on the throne, removed objections formerly weighty. On the other side it was alleged, that there was neither necessity nor occasion for the proposed scheme. A militia was local, and paid by the landholders for their protection and defence; the Scotch paid one-fortieth part only of the land tax, out of which the militia expenses were paid: the population of Scotland was a fifth of that of England; it was therefore unreasonable in her to apply for a militia, in the maintenance of which her expense would be but one-eighth of her advantage in proportion to England. The answer to this was obvious; that though the specific fund for defraying the militia expenses was the land tax, the protection of that branch of revenue was not its sole purpose, but the defence of every constituent of private and public property and security. After a warm contest, the minister being left in a minority, the bill was rejected.

Scotch militia bill.

is rejected.

IN providing the ways and means for the current year, a loan of two millions was found necessary. The funds for paying the interest, being taxes on articles of luxury, were favourable to the financial character of the minister. After passing a vote of credit for another million, the session closed on the 23d of May.

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Evacuation of Boston.—British troops sail to Halifax—objects of campaign 1776, three : first, recovery of Canada, and invasion of colonies by the lakes—secondly, expedition to Carolina—thirdly, and chiefly, invasion of New York.—Quebec relieved, and Canada recovered.—British armament under sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker, arrives too late in North Carolina—proceed to the south—siege of Charlestown—raised.—Internal proceedings of the colonies—declaration of independence.—Objects and reasons of the New York expedition—British force arrives there—description of New York and its dependencies—pacificating overtures of the British commanders—rejected.—Battle of Long Island.—Americans defeated, but escape.—Capture of New York—town set on fire by the Americans.—Battle of White Plains.—Americans defeated in one part, but the main body escapes.—Battle and capture of fort Washington.—General Howe plans detached expeditions—invasion and reduction of Rhode Island—rapid successes of lord Cornwallis in the Jerseys—consternation and flight of the Americans—expect general Howe at Philadelphia—lord Cornwallis ordered into winter quarters—revival of American spirits from the cessation of pursuit—animated to most extraordinary exertions—their offensive operations—surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, and its important effects.—Operations on the lakes—Crown Point taken, but evacuated.—General result of the campaign.—Depredations of American privateers—encouraged by France and Spain.

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Evacuation
of Boston.

THE principal scene of action in which Britain was now engaged, was the American colonies ; thither therefore, the history must call the attention of the reader. Boston, from the preceding summer, had continued in a state of blockade. Gage was returned home, and the

command had devolved on general Howe. The British admiral having been displeased with the conduct of Falmouth, a seaport town in the northern part of Massachusetts Bay, cannonaded and destroyed the place ; and the provincials being informed of this proceeding, issued out letters of marque and reprisal, declaring, however, it was their intention to confine their hostilities to the capture of ships which should carry stores and provisions to the British army at Boston. Several vessels laden with necessaries of life were taken at the very entrance of the harbour ; the capture of the coal ships was severely felt, both from the coldness of the winter in that climate, and from that being a harder season than usual. Many of the inhabitants, who were known abettors of the American cause, were still retained as hostages, and all the loyalists who could escape took refuge in Boston ; thence there was not only a want of fresh meat, but even of salt provisions. To supply the deficiency of firing, they destroyed several houses, and used the materials ; but still the scarcity increased. Aware of the difficulties, Washington prosecuted the siege with a double vigour, in order to take the place before the arrival of reinforcements from Britain. On the 2d of March, a battery was opened on the western side of the town, whence it was dreadfully annoyed by a furious discharge of cannon and bombs : and on the 5th, another acted on the eastern shore. Nevertheless, the British troops acquitted themselves with surprising fortitude, and during fourteen days endured this bombardment with undaunted courage. The besieged had no alternative, but either to dislodge the Americans, or to evacuate the town. The general attempted to attack the enemy, but found they were so strongly posted as to render the assault impracticable. The British must have ascended a perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogsheads chained together in great numbers, and filled with stones^f, to roll down upon the king's troops as they climbed up the hill. Finding that they could not force the works of the American general, and being in the

British
troops sail
for Halifax.

^f " This species of preparation, (Mr. Stedman observes,) will exemplify in a striking manner that fertility of expedients which strongly characterized the Americans during the war."

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greatest distress for want of provisions, general Howe and the British loyalists embarked for Halifax on the 17th of March, and arrived there in the end of the month. By their departure, the Americans became masters of Boston and a considerable quantity of artillery and stores, which general Howe was obliged to leave behind. Some ships were left in the bay, to protect the vessels which should arrive from England ; but, as it afterwards appeared, they were not sufficient to prevent the British transports from falling into the hands of the enemy.

●bjects of
the cam-
paign.

THE objects proposed by the British government in the present campaign were three—to relieve Quebec, recover Canada, and invade the colonies through the lakes—to make an impression on the southern provinces, and to undertake an expedition to New York. During these transactions at Boston, col. Arnold continued the blockade of Quebec, notwithstanding a very severe season, and under great difficulties ; reinforcements arrived very slowly from the congress, and the Canadians were disheartened and wavering ; the succours, however, at last came, and Quebec being cut off from supplies by land, and the ice in the river not admitting assistance from England, the towns-men and garrison experienced many difficulties. But as the season advanced for the safe navigation of the river, the Americans became more active, that they might anticipate the arrival of the troops from England : they renewed the siege, and erected batteries to burn the shipping. While the besieged were engaged in attending to those operations, Arnold attempted to storm the town in another quarter, and made his entrance into the suburbs, but could not penetrate farther. Meanwhile the small-pox, so pestilential in that country where inoculation was not common, broke out in the American army, and frightened many of the soldiers to desert. Although it was now the beginning of May, and the river was far from being clear of ice, an English squadron made its way up to Quebec, and on finding succours arrived, the besiegers retired. On the 9th of May, Carleton proceeded in pursuit of Arnold, just as they had begun the retreat. Seeing the troops, they left the artillery and military stores to the British, and thus the siege of Quebec was raised, after

Quebec is
relieved,
and Cana-
da recover-
ed.

continuing about five months. Understanding that a number of sick and wounded provincials were scattered about the woods and villages, the governor issued a proclamation, ordering the proper officers to find out these miserable people, afford them relief and assistance at the public expense, and assure them that, on their recovery, they should have the liberty to return to their respective provinces. In the end of May, several regiments arriving from Ireland and England, together with a regiment from general Howe, and the Brunswick troops, which, when added to those who were before in the province, amounted to thirteen thousand men, Carleton prepared for offensive operations. The general rendezvous was at the three rivers, about half way between Montreal and Quebec. A body of Americans having attacked the advanced division of the British troops, was repulsed with great loss. General Burgoyne arrived with the reinforcements in Canada, and was sent in pursuit of the provincials. Conscious of their inability to maintain their conquest, the provincials evacuated Montreal, fort St. John, crossed lake Champlain, and stationed themselves at Crown Point, whither the British commander did not follow them for the present. While the campaign opened thus auspiciously for Britain in the north, attempts were made to reestablish her authority in the south. The governors of the several colonies had represented, that in the middle and southern provinces there was a considerable spirit of loyalty, but that the well affected were afraid to discover their sentiments; and that if a powerful force were sent from the mother country to cooperate with them, they would immediately attach themselves to her cause. In consequence of this information, an army was prepared, under the command of sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker, and ordered to sail to North Carolina, from the loyalists, of which the most sanguine expectations were entertained.

GOVERNOR MARTIN of North Carolina, though obliged to take refuge in a ship, had been extremely active in the service of Britain: he maintained a correspondence with the settlers in the back country, especially with an unruly class of men, known by the name of regulators, who were inimical to orderly government, had formerly been

State of affairs in the Carolinas.

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very troublesome to the British establishment, and transferred to the provincials their hostility, since they had acquired the ascendancy. In the same parts, there was a totally different set of men, emigrants from the highlands of Scotland, under the pressure of the most indigent circumstances, who were distinguished for loyalty to their sovereign, and attachment to their native land, which poverty and want had compelled them to abandon. Actuated by such contrary motives to oppose the Americans, these two classes of settlers cooperated and acquired a considerable degree of force. Martin projected to unite with them all the back settlers of the southern colonies, and that the whole should act in conjunction with the king's troops, who were expected early in the spring, and also bring forward the Indians to assist the royal cause. By the desire of Martin, Mr. Macdonald, a highland gentleman, of known courage, enterprise, and ability, directed and headed the execution of the scheme: the governor also issued a proclamation, commanding all persons on their allegiance to repair to the royal standard; but it was necessary to embody the loyalists, in order to keep them steady in their intentions; and this step ultimately disconcerted the undertaking. Their hopes of success rested on the concealment of the design, until his majesty's troops should arrive; but the formation of a corps however, soon reached and alarmed the provincials. General Macdonald proposed to march to Wilmington, and there occupy a secure post, until the British landing should be able to afford them assistance. Informed of these proceedings, Mr. Moore, a provincial gentleman, and colonel of the Carolinians, advanced with a body of troops in quest of Macdonald. The highlander sent Moore a copy of the king's proclamation; in answer to which, the provincial commander transmitted the test to the congress, promising (if they should subscribe it) to treat Macdonald and his party as friends, but denouncing the severest vengeance in case of a refusal. The royalists losing time in negotiation, the provincials had leisure to assemble in greater numbers to the standard of colonel Moore. Macdonald proceeding on his march, descried Mr. Caswell, a provincial colonel, who was hastening with a body of colonists to join the general, and found him

posted at Moore's creek bridge upon cape Fear river, not far from Wilmington. The emigrants with great fury began the attack with broad swords; but colonel Macleod, the second in command, and others of their bravest officers being killed, the people, who, in the spirit of their native country regarded their leaders as chieftains, were disheartened by the fall of their commanders, and thrown into a confusion which reached the rest of the corps; the whole party was broken and dispersed, and being pursued, many of them were taken prisoners, and among others, general Macdonald. Such was the issue of the first enterprise in the southern colonies for supporting the cause of the British government.

AMONG the causes which had contributed to the distinguished success of Mr. Secretary Pitt's belligerent measures, one of the most efficacious was promptness of preparation. This was a quality extremely deficient in the armaments that were employed during the ministry of lord North, and the forces sent out on an expedition were frequently too late for accomplishing their purpose. The troops destined to cooperate with the loyalists of the south, ought to have left Cork before Christmas, that they might reach Carolina in the beginning of spring, so as to be in the field before the commencement of the great heats that are so injurious to northern constitutions, unless gradually encountered; but they did not depart from Ireland till the 7th of February, and it was the 3d of May before they arrived at cape Fear. General Clinton having joined them from Boston, took the command; and finding that from the discomfiture of the royalists he could have no hopes of success in North Carolina, resolved to make an attempt upon South Carolina, and to besiege Charlestown its capital. This town was the great support of the warlike preparations in the southern colonies, and on account both of its strength and opulence, would be an important acquisition to Britain.

British armament under sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker,

arrives too late in North Carolina;

proceeds to the south.

THE harbour of Charlestown was protected and commanded by a fort upon Sullivan's island, which is formed by the conflux of the rivers Ashly and Cooper, that almost enclose the town; and an inlet of the sea. It was projected to capture that fort and leaving a sufficient garrison

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The siege
of Charles-
town,

for its defence, to intercept all intercourse between Charlestown and the ocean. Clinton arrived on the 4th of June before the capital of South Carolina: the American commander Lee, having received accurate intelligence concerning the motion of the British general, by forced marches appeared about the same time in the neighbourhood of Charlestown, and posting himself on the banks of the river, secured a communication with Sullivan's island. Between Clinton and the fort lay Long Island, from which he understood there was a fordable passage to Sullivan's island; he stationed himself on this island constructed batteries, and prepared for the siege. Having made dispositions for commencing the attack, on the 28th of June he poured a tremendous fire from land batteries, floating batteries, and the ships. The British troops behaved with their usual valour, and the Americans displayed great courage and perseverance. Three of our ships having run aground, two of them were extricated; but the third sticking fast, was set on fire, to prevent her from falling into the hands of the enemy. The troops attempted the passage; but found that the water was not one foot in depth, as they had been informed, but near seven feet; under cover however of the fire they attempted to land, but it soon appeared that there were unexpected difficulties to encounter even if they did land. The information which the general had received concerning the access to the fort, had been extremely inaccurate; there was between it and the shore a trench, in which he had understood that the water was shallow; but, on examination, it was discovered to be extremely deep, and also much more under the command of the castle than the general had supposed: the troops were for the present, therefore, ordered to return to their camp. The next day, dispositions were made for repeating the attempt, and there was a hot fire on both sides, by which two British ships being much damaged, were ordered to retire. The attempt was repeated in a part somewhat shallower than where the first trial had been made. General Clinton and several other officers waded up to their shoulders, but finding the depth of the water increasing, were unable to proceed; the ships could not approach so near as to do effectual execution, and gene-

ral Lee was in great force on the other side to defend the forts : for all these reasons, Clinton thought it expedient to desist from the attempt. It was said by military critics, that the British general had not bestowed sufficient pains to investigate the situation and accessibility of the place before he commenced the attack ; that his ships might have approached much nearer the fort, and covered the landing of the troops : by political critics it was alleged, that the difficulties arose from the general causes which had been predicted ; the determination and force of the Americans, inspired by the love of liberty, and thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the country and posts which they had to defend.

LORD DUNMORE continued to carry on naval hostilities on the coasts of the southern provinces, but finding he could make no effectual impression, retired to Florida. The Americans, on the other hand, fitting out a squadron from Boston, attacked the Bahama islands, and plundered them of stores and artillery, by which means they brought to their country a supply which was very much wanted. Clinton was summoned by general Howe to meet him at New York, but before we accompany the southern force to its junction with the commander in chief and the main army, it is proper to take a view of the civil proceedings in the colonies, which, both on account of their political importance and influence on military operations, merit and require historical notice.

IN the former year, the provincial assembly of New England had passed resolutions, manifesting a disposition to independency ; but rather to feel the pulse of the other colonies and of their constituents, than to pledge themselves by an explicit proposition. Their delegates in the congress, and the other most violent members, having sounded the rest of the representatives, discovered, that from several colonies there was an aversion to that measure, and that a separation was regarded as one of the greatest of evils, which ought not to be incurred unless absolutely necessary for the preservation of their liberty. Bred up in republicanism, the New Englanders had deemed independence on a crowned head a desirable object ; but other colonists, educated with monarchical principles, and attached to the

Internal
acts of the
colonies.

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king and people of Great Britain, regarded a connexion between themselves and the parent country as constituting the supreme advantages of both countries, and separation as only not so bad as slavery. The New Englanders had been winning over the other colonies to their sentiments and principles, with great, but hitherto not complete, success. The congress was becoming more and more subject to the influence of its republican president; but still desirous of peace, it waited with anxiety for the result of its petition to the king, and for the measures which should be adopted in parliament. When it was learned that no attention would be paid to the petition, that nothing short of unconditional submission would satisfy the British government, and that great armaments, including a numerous body of foreign mercenaries, were prepared in order to subjugate America, the greater number of delegates adopted the sentiments which were first generated and afterwards cherished by the New Englanders. On the 30th of May, a prefatory resolution was passed, declaring, that the prohibitory act by which they were excluded from the protection of the crown, the rejection of their petition for redress and reconciliation, with the intended exertion of all the British forces, assisted by foreign mercenaries, for their destruction, depriving the colonies of the king's protection, annihilated their allegiance; that it became now necessary for them to take the power of government into their own hands, It was therefore resolved, "to recommend to the various assemblies and conventions in the United States of America, where no form of government adequate to the exigencies of affairs had yet been adopted, to form such a constitution as should be most conducive to the public welfare and security."

In the middle and southern provinces, of those who were determined to resist coercion, there were two parties: the one wished merely to oppose all acts of hostility, but still to leave room for reunion;^g the other resolved not only to resist, but to outrage the British government. In a state of public ferment, moderation is generally regarded as lukewarmness, and indifference as enmity to the pre-

vailing sentiment. In most of the colonial assemblies, being guided by the advice of the congress, they instructed their delegates to support independence. In Pennsylvania and Maryland,^h the assemblies resolved to oppose this measure; and the amount of their reasoning was—Britain has oppressed, and is attempting to subdue America, it becomes us therefore to resist, but the necessity of resistance does not justify measures injurious to ourselves, and not necessary to render our resistance effectual; we can fight as well without mentioning independence, as after declaring it; we will not actually obey the commands of Britain, while inconsistent with our constitutional rights, but we ought not therefore to preclude the possibility of a reconciliation,ⁱ by a change in the British counsels, which experience of the inefficacy of her plans may in time be expected to produce; meanwhile our efforts shall be as energetic as those of the most zealous votary of independence. The separation from Britain, even if finally attainable, would be productive of great and evident evils. The protection of the parent state, the salutary power of a common sovereign to balance so many separate and possibly discordant provinces, the important political and commercial advantages of the old union appeared in a striking light to every man of discernment, whose mind was not clouded by the passions that overspread the multitude; but no art was spared to make the contrary opinion popular, and no means were more successful than publications which, by enumerating the various acts of alleged oppression, stimulated the hatred and resentment of the children against their parents. Of these works one of the most effectual was an essay of the noted Thomas Paine, written in the style and spirit which he has so frequently exhibited, strong, coarse, and inflammatory. The bold and unqualified intrepidity of assertion passed, with undisciplined understandings, as unanswerable arguments; familiarity of illustration, and vulgarity of allusion, highly pleased unrefined tastes; an appeal to their prejudices and prepossessions gratified their passions, and they concluded that he must be right whose opinions

^h Andrews, vol. ii. p. 209.ⁱ Annual Register, 1776, p. 164.

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Declara-
tion of in-
depen-
dence.

and sentiments agreed with their own.^k Displaying an ability and skill, the amount of which was that *he could set fire to combustibles*. Paine's address acted powerfully on the populace of Philadelphia, and contributed to inspire them with different sentiments from their provincial assembly and their delegates in the congress. The delegates, however, thought it necessary on so important a question to take the sense of their constituents, and after a great contest it was carried that they should be instructed to agree to the determination of congress. Notwithstanding the artifices of demagogues, there still remained in Philadelphia a considerable body inimical to independence. In Maryland, the delegates were instructed to oppose the question of independence in congress. Having accordingly voted against it, they were driven from the assembly; and, on returning home, they found the violent party gaining ground. A second meeting of constituents was called, and they returned with instructions to vote for independence. On the 4th of July, the congress of delegates from thirteen English colonies in America, declared the provinces a free and independent state. In the declaration, they commenced with observing, that when it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands^l which have connected it with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature, of nations, and of God, entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the cause which impels them to the separation. Government being an institution for the happiness of the governed, whenever it becomes destructive of that end, must be dissolved. Having laid down this general rule, they proceeded to enumerate the facts which, in their opinion, proved the British government of our colonies to have been destructive of its end, and comprised in the detail all the acts already mentioned: in every stage of oppression, they alleged, that they humbly petitioned the king for redress, but with no effect. "We have applied also (they said) "to our British brethren; we have reminded them of the

^k Ramsay, vol. i. p. 336.^l See State Papers, July 4th, 1776.

“ circumstances of our emigration and settlement ; we
“ have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity,
“ and conjured them by the ties of our common kindred
“ to disavow those usurpations which would inevitably
“ interrupt our connexion and correspondence : they have
“ been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity ; we
“ must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces
“ our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of man-
“ kind—in war, enemies ; in peace, friends.” For these
reasons, they solemnly published, that they were henceforth
free and independent states, and absolved from allegiance
to the British crown ; that all political connexion between
them and Great Britain was and ought to be completely
terminated ; that they had full power to levy war, conclude
peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do every
other act which belonged to independent states. This cele-
brated declaration, which separated the colonies from Bri-
tain, was received with enthusiastic applause by the peo-
ple, but by some of the wisest opponents of the mother
country it was not equally relished. General Washing-
ton himself, though so strenuous and efficacious a sup-
porter of American resistance to what he conceived
oppression and tyranny, never, as far as I can learn, ex-
pressed an approbation of the total dissolution of the con-
nexion between the colonies and the mother country.^m
His great and comprehensive mind viewed remote and

^m In the original impression, I had written that general Washington *was far from approving of an entire dissolution of the connexion*. That opinion I founded partly on the general wisdom and moderation of that illustrious American, and the enmity which his conduct uniformly exhibited to democratic violence ; and partly on a letter for many years imputed to him, and inserted in a publication, which, till very lately passed for genuine. The work in question is entitled, “ Epistles, Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from general Washington ;” and was long current, as its contents were probable, and its averments remained uncontradicted. The letter from which I made the citation inserted in a note, pages 65 and 66, of vol. ii. had been with five others, denied by general Washington, in an American gazette, to be genuine, a short time before his death. This disavowal I did not hear of, till several months after the publication of the work when Mr. Bleecker, of New York, wrote me, that the epistles in question were spurious, and referred me to the gazette in which they were disavowed by general Washington. Far from wishing to impute any expression to any character in my history which he did not use, I am desirous of correcting the error respecting that fact ; and for that purpose have directed the quotation from the alleged letter to Mr. Lund Washington to be cancelled, and the present explanation substituted in its place.

My general opinion, however, that Washington, so eminent for wisdom and moderation, was an enemy to democratic violence, not resting on one letter, but on the whole tenour of his conduct, continues the same.

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distant objects ; he saw that whatever was the enmity between Britain and America at present, it must at length terminate. He knew the vast advantages that had accrued, and the greater which might proceed from the renewal of friendly relations between Britain and North America ; their language, their respective objects and pursuits fitted them for a reciprocity of benefit, if united, which he did not apprehend they could enjoy if separated. Distinguished as a champion of liberty, he was its champion with the principles and discrimination of a wise man ; he loved freedom secured by order, and was a profound admirer of the British constitution : he did not therefore favour the democratical principles which, first spread by the New Englanders, had extended through the colonies ; he foresaw that the constitution resulting from independence would be republican, and might from the influence of democratic zealots be inconsistent with tranquillity and order. He therefore did not enter into the violence which was manifested by many abettors of independence. Engaged however, in conducting military affairs, he did not deem himself necessitated publicly to declare every opinion which he might form upon the civil and political proceedings of his countrymen ; and without agreeing with every demagogue that could agitate and inflame the populace, he continued to support his country in defending what he thought her liberty ; some of her counsels and resolutions might not meet his approbation, but was he therefore to desert her in war and danger ? As a patriot, he employed his talents not only in endeavouring to extricate her from danger and difficulty, but in sacrificing his own particular sentiments for the sake of unanimity and the general welfare.

WRITERS favourable to the coercion of America affirm, that independence was long before that period the aim of their leaders ; but being able to adduce no testimony or documents in support of their assertion, rest its weight on probable inferences from their conduct. “ Hence “ (says a late historianⁿ) their complaints of grievances were “ clamorous, frequent, and specific, while their professions “ of attachment and loyalty were merely general, and attend-

“ed with no precise offers of conciliation or satisfaction.” The American statement of grievances, in their petitions to the king, and other representations, were no doubt specific; if they had been vague, they would have been nugatory. Their professions of loyalty and attachment were attended with no precise offers of conciliation or satisfaction, because in their view they were suffering unconstitutional injury, and prayed for constitutional redress; they were reclaiming a right, and not making proposals for a bargain. They did not conceive themselves to have committed injustice against the British government, and therefore made no offers of satisfaction either precise or general. Their propositions of conciliation were simple: they apprehended that the new system of legislature was a violation of their privileges as British subjects, and declared that they would return to amity when, by the discontinuance of the present measures, their constitutional blessings should be restored. How entreaties or even requisitions that their connexion with the mother country should be replaced on the former footing, demonstrate an intention of entirely dissolving the tie, it is difficult to discover. A farther argument to evince the American desire of independence is, that their demand of redress in the repeal of all the acts since 1763, must be insincere, for it could not be expected to be successful. “No party in Britain could attempt conciliation on such grounds: *because*, thereby they must have abandoned some principle:” the amount of which reasoning is, that if a statesman or lawgiver has proposed or adopted any measure or regulation, he must adhere to his resolution, that he may preserve his consistency; a doctrine, which, in such fallible beings as men, might often contravene the plainest dictates of justice and wisdom. In the colonial range of complaint, therefore, I can perceive no proofs of determined separation. From the series of acts which the narrative has presented, it appears that the New Englanders, since the commencement of the disputes, manifested dispositions to republicanism, from which we might fairly infer a desire, and even a design of eventual separation; but that the middle and southern colonies were the votaries of loyal and constitutional connexion

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and subordination; that their cooperation with the colonists of the north, was the immediate effect of the system of 1774; that their subsequent resistance arose from refused redress, and attempted coercion; and their consent to the scheme of independence, from the total rejection of all their applications, combined with elation for the successes of the former campaign. The independence of America, therefore, whether wise or unwise, evidently proceeded from no preconcerted design, but was a natural consequence of the measures that were pursued by the mother country, and the progress of human passions, when they refuse the admonitions of reason and wisdom; from disputes to quarrels, repeated with increasing asperity, until they terminated in a final rupture.

Objects and
reasons of
the expedition to
New York.

THE main object of military operations was New York; and for making this part of America the chief seat of war, there were various reasons. The province of New York, running northwest joins with Canada, that runs southwest, and both together enclose New England, and divide it from the southern colonies. By possessing New York and the southern part of the province, while the Canadian army invaded it on the north, a communication, it was conceived, might be established between the secondary and primary army; both could cooperate vigorously, easily reduce New England, afterwards act in concert against the more southern colonies, and procure the assistance of the back settlers, many of whom were well disposed to the mother country. New York was a central position, from which operations might be directed either to the one side or the other, as occasion might serve, or circumstances require, so that this position enabled the British commander to prescribe the scene of action and to quit it when he chose; and if the army were withdrawn from the field, the great north river, and the different channels between the islands and the main land, would enable him by his ships and detachments, to harass the adjoining countries; while the provincials, however powerful, could make no attempt upon the islands that would not be attended with greater inconveniences, and liable to imminent danger. Besides these advantages, Long Island was very fertile in wheat and all other corns, abounded with herbs and

flocks, and was deemed almost equal alone to the maintenance of an army. In the province, especially in the upper part towards Albany, there were reported to be many loyalists, who would flock to the British standard as soon as they could manifest their sentiments safely. New York, from these circumstances, was an object of high importance, and its attainment was not reckoned difficult: much the better part of the province is enclosed in islands, which being long and narrow, were exposed on all sides to attacks from our fleets, and to the descents of our troops; and when conquered, the protection of the ships of war would be as effectual in their preservation, as their hostility had been in their reduction. These were the reasons on which the military plan was founded, and whatever the sentiments of the reader may be respecting the wisdom of the statesman who proposed, and the lawgivers who adopted the measures which produced enmities between America and the mother country, he will probably without hesitation admit, that the plan of military operation was not discreditable to the talents of its author as a war minister. But the history now proceeds to narrate its execution.

GENERAL HOWE was obliged to remain at Halifax for two months, to receive reinforcements which he expected from England, with a fleet commanded by his brother, lord Howe; the armament from England much exceeded the time that had been planned for its departure from home. The general, therefore, resolved to wait no longer at Halifax, but to proceed southwards, that there might be no delay after lord Howe should reach America. Leaving Halifax on the 11th June, in the end of the month he arrived in Sandy Hook near New York. During his passage, he was joined by six transports full of Highland troops, belonging to the forty-second and seventy-first regiments; from them he learned that colonel Campbell with a detachment was separated from the rest of the armament: he afterwards found, that going into Boston, where they expected to have joined the British army, they were taken prisoners by the provincials.

British armament
arrives at
New York.

THE town of New York is situated in an island running from north to south, at the mouth of the Hudson river, at the southern extremity, separated from New York

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Description of
New York
and its de-
penden-
cies.

island by a narrow channel, on the east, is Long Island ; directly south, in sight, but at a greater distance, is Staten Island ; beyond which, and in the same direction, lies Sandy Hook. The Americans having been informed of the destination of the British armament, had been at great pains to fortify New York town and island, and to make the access as difficult as possible, by sinking ships in the most approachable part of the channel ; they were also provided with a numerous artillery, and guarded by a strong body of troops. On the northern extremity of New York island, it communicated with the continent by a bridge, called King's Bridge. Long Island, from its extent, was not so strongly fortified, yet was well guarded, had an encampment on the side next New York, and also works on the most accessible parts of the coast. Staten Island, being less valuable, was not guarded with equal strength and vigilance : thither, therefore, he proceeded, and landed without opposition : he met with Mr. Tryon, late governor of New York, and other loyalists, who informed him of the disposition of the province, and strength of the enemy. From the accounts which he received of the provincial force, he found that it would be impracticable to commence hostilities until the armament from England should arrive. It was the 14th of July before lord Howe reached Staten Island : the troops that were conveyed in the fleet consisted of twenty regiments of foot, and a regiment of light dragoons, and also the Hessian auxiliaries : so reinforced, the British army amounted to near thirty thousand men. The commanders possessed high characters, and had distinguished themselves in subordinate stations of trust and importance in the former war. The naval officer had, in the year 1758, on the coast of France, laid the foundation of a fame which was increased during subsequent services : the military gentleman was the distinguished favourite of general Wolfe, led the body which first seized the heights of Abraham,^o and afterwards supported and advanced the estimation in which he was held. It was true, he never had an opportunity of signaling himself as a general, except at Bunker's hill ; and having

• See this history, vol. i. p. 154.

acted there under the command of another, he merely proved, as before, that he was an active and intrepid soldier: but from his conduct in secondary situations, he was very naturally allowed credit for abilities which could fill up the first with equal propriety. From their near relation, no doubt was entertained that there would be the utmost harmony between the general and admiral; and the appointment of lord Howe and sir William to the chief command of the naval and military operations, afforded general satisfaction in England, and the most sanguine expectations were entertained of their success. It must be acknowledged, that their hopes were not without apparently probable grounds. The American army did not exceed twenty thousand,^p raw and undisciplined,^q to oppose thirty thousand veterans. These were unprovided with the various accommodations and even necessities of a military life, whereas the British forces were abundantly supplied with every article that could be useful in warfare.

BESIDES their military powers, the general and admiral were appointed, under the late act of parliament, the commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies, and for granting pardon to such as should deserve the royal mercy. Before they commenced hostile operations, they tried pacific proposals; and their first act was a circular letter from lord Howe to the late governors of the several provinces, acquainting them with the power which was intrusted to his brother, and accompanied with a declaration to the public to a similar effect. His lordship, at the same time, sent a letter to the American general, addressed to George Washington esq. which that commander refused to receive, as it did not describe the rank that he held under the United States.^r On the 20th of August, general Howe sent his adjutant, general Patterson, with a letter addressed to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. The general received them with great politeness, but absolutely declined to accept an official letter without an address

Pacific
overtures
of the Bri-
tish com-
manders.

^p See Stedman.
Washington.

^q See general Washington's letter to Mr. Lund.
^r This conduct was highly applauded by the congress, which passed a resolution, directing, that for the future no commander in their service should receive any letters or message from the enemy which did not acknowledge in its address their official character.

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naming his office. A conference, however, ensued, in which nothing effectual was done. General Washington said, the power of the commissioners appeared to be no more than to grant pardons: they were only defending what they deemed their indisputable right, had committed no fault, and therefore wanted no pardon. Doctor Franklin had for many years resided in England as agent for the colonies of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania; he was lately returned to America, and being a member of the congress, possessed very great influence. Lord Howe addressed a letter to him soon after his arrival at Staten Island; therein stated the nature of his commission, expressed his hopes that America would unite with the British in dispositions for peace, and requested the assistance of Doctor Franklin to effect this purpose. Franklin replied, by informing his lordship, that preparatory to any propositions of amity or peace, it would be required that Britain should acknowledge the independence of America, defray the expenses of the war, and indemnify the colonies for burning their towns. A correspondence also took place between lord Howe and lord Drummond, which the latter communicated to general Washington; but it was equally unavailing, the same arguments being used on the side of Britain, met with the same objections on the side of America.

are reject-
ed.

The Bri-
tish forces
take the
field.

THESE overtures of Britain being unavailing, and the reinforcements being now arrived, the British commanders opened the campaign on the 22d of August, a very late season, especially in a country in which winter sets in soon and severely; but as it evidently arose from the tardiness with which troops arrived from Europe, the delay was not imputable to the commanders in America. The British forces began with an attempt to reduce Long Island; and a division of four thousand men, crossing from Staten Island, under cover of three frigates and two bomb ketches, landed there without resistance in Gravesend Bay, adjoining the strait that separates the two islands. The detachment having effected its purpose, the rest of the army without difficulty effected their landing. The Americans were posted near Red Hook, almost opposite to New York, commanded by general Putnam. The road from

Gravesend to Red Hook lay across Flat Bush, a woody tract of land, behind which a ridge of hills arise. General Putnam had sent a great body of troops to seize the defiles which led through those eminences. Lord Cornwallis advanced towards the pass, but finding it already seized by the enemy, in conformity to orders which he had received, he refrained from an attack. Major general Grant commanded the left wing that extended to the coast. The Hessians under general De Heister composing the centre, advanced to Flat Bush, while the commander in chief, with the greater part of the British forces, marched to the right over Flat Land. General Clinton and sir William Erskine having reconnoitred the position of the enemy, and finding also that their attention was chiefly directed towards the Hessians, reported to general Howe, that they thought it would not be difficult to turn the left flank of the provincials, and thereby force them either to hazard a battle, or abandon the hills. Thinking the proposal practicable, the general consented. It was concerted, that to favour the design of the right wing, the attack should be begun by general Grant and the Hessians on the left and centre. Farther to draw off the attention of the enemy from the principal movement, the king's ships stationed to the right of them moved towards the town so as to make them conceive New York to be the immediate object.

On the 26th of August, at nine o'clock in the evening, general Clinton, lord Cornwallis, and lord Percy, advanced with part of the troops, and general Howe himself brought forward the rest of that division. At nine in the morning the British passed the heights; general Clinton turned the left of the enemy, and crossed to Bedford, while Grant and De Heister attacked the right and the centre. On the side of Flat Bush, the Americans made a vigorous resistance; but their left wing, finding itself attacked both on flank and rear, was thrown into confusion, and fled in all directions. The centre and right of the provincials, hearing of this total route of the left, suddenly retreated in disorder; about two thousand of the enemy were killed, and one thousand taken prisoners. Among the captured were, generals Sullivan, Udell, and lord Stirling: about

The Amé-
ricans are
defeated;

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but escape.

three hundred British were killed and wounded. Of the slain were, lieutenant colonel Grant and sir Alexander Murray, both officers of great merit; the latter a young Scottish baronet, of independent fortune, who leaving the comforts of ease and affluence for hardship and danger, earned a premature but glorious death in the service of his king and country. General Washington had been at New York when the engagement began; hearing that a battle had commenced, he hastened over to the assistance of his countrymen; but when he arrived, he found his troops involved in difficulties by the stratagem of the enemy. On seeing their situation, he did not doubt but they would be entirely destroyed, as he conceived general Howe would certainly attack, and as certainly force, the American lines. Many of the British officers and soldiers were of the same opinion. Confident, however, that they must be reduced by regular approaches, without risking the loss that might be sustained by an assault, the general declined the attempt. On the evening of the 27th, the British army opened the intrenchments before the American lines: the provincials finding it impossible to maintain their post in Long Island, on the 29th, evacuated their encampment, and general Washington executed the retreat with great ability; his troops were withdrawn from the camp and the different works, and with the baggage, stores, and part of the artillery, were conveyed to the water side, they embarked, and passed over a long ferry to New York with such wonderful silence and order, that the British army did not perceive the least motion, and were surprised in the morning at finding the lines abandoned, and seeing the last of the rear-guard in their boats and out of danger. To do full justice to this masterly retreat, it must be considered that they had been driven to the corner of an island where they were inclosed in a space of two square miles, with near twenty thousand well disciplined troops in front; and in the rear, an arm of the sea a mile wide, which could not be crossed but in several embarkations. Notwithstanding these obstacles the provincials did not lose a single man, and carried off the greater part of their provisions, ammunition,

* Representative of the family of Balmain in Perthshire.

and artillery. Military critics were of opinion, that sir William Howe might have forced their lines on the day of the battle ; and, since he chose the more gradual operation of a siege, and must have known that from their reduced force it was their interest to withdraw, he might have divined it to be their wish ; therefore, it was to be expected that he would have been so vigilant as to render their retreat impracticable ; and such a prevention would have been by no means difficult, because the sea between Red Hook and New York is deep enough for a seventy-four gun ship to anchor, and he might have easily stationed frigates which would have commanded the passage, and prevented their escape.^c The boats which had brought them from New York to Long Island, had lain on the Long Island shore three days after their defeat, in readiness to carry them over to New York. These, it is affirmed, might have been easily destroyed by the British ; but they did not experience the smallest annoyance.

POSSESSED of Long Island, the English army had the command of New York, and made preparations for a descent upon the island : two brigades of Hessians and one British being left at Bedford, the rest of the army was posted at Newtown, Hellgate, Bushwick and Flushing. On the west side of Long Island, opposite to Horan's Hook, where the enemy had thrown up strong works, two batteries were erected.^d This work commanded Hellgate, a passage between the Islands of Buchanan, Montserrat, and the Two Brothers, into the sound which separates Long Island from New York and the Connecticut shore. The English batteries, in a short time, not only silenced the fire of the enemy from the work, but broke it up entirely, and rendered it utterly indefensible.

WHILE these preparations were going on, the British commanders again made overtures for peace. General Sullivan was dismissed on his parole, and despatched to Philadelphia, to submit to the congress some propositions, whereby lord Howe expressed a wish to confer with several moderate members, not as deputies from an independent state, but private gentlemen of influence in the colonies, that in these conferences they might adjust prelimi-

Second
overtures
for con-
ciliation.

^c See Stedman.

^d Stedman, vol. i. p. 199.

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naries for an accommodation of differences: he strongly insisted, that this was a favourable crisis, as neither party were reduced to a state of humiliation, so as to preclude discussion and modification of terms. The congress replied, that they could not send their members to confer with him as private gentlemen, but they would depute a committee to learn whether his lordship was authorized to treat with persons appointed by congress: if that were the case, the committee would receive such proposals; and accordingly doctor Benjamin Franklin, Messrs. John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, were the committee appointed to confer with lord Howe on this subject. Howe still adhered to the contents of the message which he sent by general Sullivan: the committee informed him that they could not, nor should not, act but as deputies from the congress; nevertheless they were desirous of hearing what proposals he had to make. His lordship told them, that the king and government of Great Britain anxiously wished to finish the dissensions between Britain and the colonies. To accomplish this desirable end, the obnoxious acts should be revised, and every just cause of complaint removed, if America would declare her willingness to submit to the authority of Britain. The committee replied, that an acknowledgement of British superiority could not now be expected: petitions, his lordship must remember, had been presented by the colonies to the king and parliament, but had been disregarded and despised: America had not separated herself from Britain, but Britain from America. The colonies had not declared themselves independent, till the parent country had declared war: the subjects had not renounced allegiance, until the sovereign had withdrawn protection: even were the congress willing to replace America in the situation which she held in 1763, that body was not competent to execute such intentions: independence was declared in consequence of the collective voice of the people, by whom alone it could be annulled: but though the Americans did not desire to return under the dominion of England; they were willing to enter into any treaty which might be advantageous to both. From this answer, lord Howe, seeing that America was determined to persist in independence,

put an end to the conference. He soon after published a declaration to the people of America, in which he offered pardon and protection to all who should return to their former submission and obedience; and acquainted them, that it was his majesty's intention to consent to the revisal of such acts as might aggrieve his subjects. The proclamation, however, produced very little effect; the concession was too late, and the sword only could decide the contest.

THE two armies were divided by the East river, about thirteen hundred yards in breadth; and, after a long and severe cannonade, it was resolved, that the first division of the army, should, on the 15th of September, enter the island of New York. Accordingly, commanded by general Clinton, lord Cornwallis, major general Vaughan, brigadier general Leslie, and the Hessian colonel Donop, they embarked at the head of Newtown bay, which deeply indents Long Island, and where they were out of sight of the enemy. Being covered by five ships of war, on their entrance into the river they proceeded to Kipp's Bay, about three miles north of New York; where, being less expected than in some other places, the preparation for defence was not so great: the works, however, were neither feeble nor destitute of troops, but the fire from the ships was so incessant and so well conducted, that they were soon abandoned, and the army landed without opposition. The enemy immediately abandoned the city of New York, and all their posts on the south part of the island, and retired towards the north, where their strength chiefly lay. The Americans had resolved, if the English obtained possession of New York, previous to the evacuation to set it on fire; but they were obliged to leave it too quickly to carry their designs into execution. Some incendiaries, however, secreted themselves in deserted houses, and contrived to set fire to the town in several places. On the morning of the 21st of September, about a third part of the town was destroyed; and it was owing to the extraordinary exertion of the soldiers, that the whole was not consumed.

Capture of
New York.

The town
is set on
fire by the
Ameri-
cans,

THE general had fortified Kingsbridge, in order to secure a retreat; and the works on both sides of the pas-

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sage were so strong, that they appeared to defy all attempts on either. At Kingsbridge, ten thousand of the Americans were posted, and six thousand five hundred at Harlem, near New York. The whole force was so advantageously disposed, as to render an attack dangerous from New York. General Howe, finding he could make no impression on them in that quarter, resolved to attack them from another: he proposed to move a great part of his army to the continent behind Kingsbridge, in the rear of the enemy, on the side whence they derived their provision; but to retain possession of New York by a strong garrison, protected in front by a chain of redoubts, and in the rear and on both the sides by the fleet. This manoeuvre would compel the provincials either to hazard a battle, or be confined in New York island, cut off by the army or fleet from every supply of provisions, the ships guarding the passage from the Jerseys, while the troops possessed the country adjoining Kingsbridge. On the 12th of October, general Howe embarked his troops, crossed over to the continent towards Connecticut, and landed on Erog's Neck, near West Chester: here he was obliged to wait five days for stores from Staten Island; and on the 18th, receiving information that Pell's Point would be a more convenient place for landing, the British reembarked, and came ashore at the mouth of Hutchinson's river, whence they advanced up the country. Extending from East Chester to New Rochelle, there are two roads to Connecticut, the lower near the sea, the upper through high grounds called the White Plains. The lower route was, by their last movement, in possession of his majesty's troops; and they now prepared to seize the higher. Meanwhile general Washington discovered that if he remained in his present position, he would be obliged to hazard a general battle, which might be in its event decisively fatal to the colonies, as there could be no possibility of a retreat. His army was originally inferior in force and discipline to the royal host, and now reduced by recent defeat and sickness, it was still more dispirited: from the same causes, great animosities prevailed between the troops of the northern and the southern colonies. As victory was little to be expected in such circumstances, it was Washington's

object to avoid a battle if possible; but if an engagement was inevitable, to change his ground, that he might have the greater probability of securing a retreat. Leaving therefore New York island, he posted his army about seventeen thousand in number, near Kingsbridge, and occupied the ground from thence to White Plains, having the river Brunx in front, and detached eight thousand men to occupy the eastern bank; on the 26th, crossing with his whole army, he occupied a very strong position.

On the 28th of October, the royal army, which consisted of thirteen thousand men leaving its encampment, advanced in two columns; general Clinton commanding the right, general De Heister the left. They found the Americans encamped on a long ridge of hill, on the brow of which they had hastily constructed lines. A bend of the Brunx protected the right flank, and another turning surrounded the rear of the right wing. The left wing was posted on uneven ground, steep and rugged in front, but affording a secure retreat in the rear. The most accessible part was the centre, the slope of the hill being there gradual, the lines not fraised, and the ditches, from the rockiness of the soil and the shortness of the time, necessarily shallow. A body of provincials posted on the other side of the Brunx, commanded a ford opposite to the right flank. General Howe, informed of the position of this detachment, and judging that it was stationed there to cover the right flank, sent a body of troops across the river, with a view to dislodge the enemy from their rising ground, gall the flank which would be thus left defenceless, and thereby facilitate the operations in front of the camp. The troops sent upon that service under general Leslie and colonel Donop, consisting both of British and Hessians, vied with each other in courage and expedition, passed the ford in the face of the enemy's fire, formed on the bank, marched with alacrity and vigour up the hill, charged the enemy with their bayonets, and drove them from their works. General Howe, in the mean time, made no attempt to attack the enemy's lines, or to force their main body to battle. During the night, the provincials drew back their encampment, and thereby strengthened their intrenchments; whereupon the British

One part
of the
American
corps is de-
feated.

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The main
body
escapes.Battle and
capture of
fort Wash-
ington.

commander thought it unwise to make a general assault until some fresh troops should arrive from York island. On the 30th, the expected reinforcement came, and the general professed an intention of attacking the camp next morning. A heavy rain having fallen during the night, he judged the ground too slippery on so steep a hill for being attempted, therefore that day the assault was deferred. The succeeding night the provincials evacuated their camp, and retired back into the country; after having in their retreat set fire to all the houses on White Plains, they took possession of the high ground towards North Castle. General Howe, conceiving the enemy could not be drawn to an engagement, judged it expedient to pursue them no farther, and employed himself in reducing Kingsbridge and fort Washington, that he might be master of the whole of New York island. The last of these posts was very important, as it secured an immediate intercourse with the Jersey shore, and commanded the navigation of the North river. Sensible of the value of this place, the provincials had garrisoned it with three thousand men, commanded by colonel Magaw. On the 15th of November, the fort was summoned to surrender; but the commander answered that he would defend it to the last extremity: it was therefore resolved to attempt a storm. Next morning the royalists made an assault in four divisions; the first, consisting of Hessians, was conducted by general Knyphausen, on the north side of the three others, being British troops; the second was led by general Matthew, supported and covered by lord Cornwallis; the third was conducted by colonel Stirling; and the forty-second regiment, the last, by lord Percy. The Hessians were obliged to pass through a wood, in which the enemy were very advantageously posted; a hot engagement taking place in the ascent of a hill, they made their way through the thicket, and climbed to the top of an eminence. The other divisions were equally active and successful; the royal highlanders particularly distinguished themselves: before they landed from the continent, they were exposed to a heavy fire from the American batteries; and these continued to play upon them as they were ascending a steep hill. The heroes bore all with firmness and perseverance,

gained the summit, and after an obstinate resistance, took one hundred and seventy prisoners: the enemy unable to resist any longer, surrendered at discretion. By the capture of fort Washington, and the surrender of Kingsbridge which followed soon after, the British troops were in possession not only of New York and the adjacent islands, but also of an easy access either to New England or the Jerseys. Thus situated, general Howe planned two expeditions, one under lord Cornwallis to the Jerseys, another under sir Henry Clinton to Rhode Island. General Clinton and sir Peter Parker commanded an expedition to Rhode Island; the provincials abandoned it at their approach, and they took possession of the province, which was deemed a very advantageous acquisition, since it had been a great rendezvous for privateers, that had captured a considerable number of British ships. On the 18th of November, lord Cornwallis crossed over to the Jersey shore with about five thousand men, and landed eight miles above fort Lee; when they had almost surprised the garrison, and made the enemies prisoners of war; but a deserter informing the Americans of the approach of the king's troops, they evacuated the fort with great expedition, leaving to the British their provisions and artillery. His lordship now penetrated into East and West Jersey, and took possession of the principal towns as far Brunswick. The American troops fled before him in the greatest dismay. In this career of success and pursuit, he was arrested by an order from the commander in chief, to prevent him from advancing farther. From the consternation of the provincial forces in the Jerseys, it was the general opinion of military men, that if lord Cornwallis had been permitted to proceed, he would have taken Philadelphia.

General Howe plans detached expeditions.

Invasion and reduction of Rhode Island.

Rapid success of Cornwallis in the Jerseys.

GENERAL WASHINGTON commanded the troops in the Jerseys and on the Delaware; Lee was intrusted with a body of forces in the province of New York, and having conceived Washington's situation to be dangerous, resolved to cross the North river, and form a junction with him, as they marched westwards towards the Delaware. On the 13th of December he quitted his camp, in order to reconnoitre the enemy; in the course of this employment,

Capture of general Lee.

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being about three miles distant from his army, he stopt at a house to breakfast. General Howe had despatched colonel Harcourt to obtain intelligence concerning general Lee's route and motions. Having traced him as he advanced, he determined still longer to watch his progress. In the course of this service, he intercepted a countryman carrying a letter from general Lee, by which he found where he was ; learning also that he was slightly guarded, he projected to carry him off, and galloping with his party to the place where Lee had halted, took effectual means to prevent his escape, forced open the doors, made him a prisoner, and conveyed him to the commander in chief at New York. The Americans severely felt the loss of this general, who possessed great abilities and very extensive knowledge ; he had formerly been a lieutenant colonel in the British service, had served with reputation in the seven years war both in America and Portugal, and was highly esteemed for his military conduct. A restless disposition, and a fortune which enabled him to gratify his inclinations, had induced him after the peace to travel : he traversed most of the continent of Europe, visited the various courts, and was well acquainted with the respective governments, customs, manners, and languages of the several nations. Being disgusted by some persons in the British administration, he, on the first disturbances in America, crossed the Atlantic, and offered his services to the congress. His proposals were received with joy, and he was appointed major general. By his talents, activity, and skill, he had been eminently useful in disciplining the American troops, and greatly contributed to support the provincial cause. This able man was by no means without his defects ; he disbelieved and ridiculed revealed and even natural religion, was loose in his moral principles, and profligate in his character : his very efforts in the service of the colonies arose from unworthy motives ; because he conceived some ground of displeasure against persons employed under the British government, he made war against his king and native country. There being no British officer of equal rank a prisoner with the Americans, general Washington offered six field officers in exchange for Lee : but general Howe answered, that he was

a deserter from the British service, and therefore could not be considered as a prisoner of war. Washington contended, that having resigned his commission before he accepted of a command in the provincial service, the general was not a deserter. Howe adhered to his resolution, and would not release him, but kept him a close prisoner. This rigorous conduct produced retaliation on the other side: colonel Campbell, who had been before treated as befitted his condition, was the first who experienced disagreeable effects, owing to the British treatment of Lee; he was now confined in a dungeon, and the other officers, though not handled with such severity, underwent very great hardships.

THE affairs of the provincials appeared now to be in a desperate situation: by the orders of the general to lord Cornwallis, they had been suffered to cross the Delaware; but no doubt was entertained that, as soon as the river was frozen over, not only a detachment, but the whole army under Howe himself, would advance in pursuit of the discomfited and flying enemy, proceed to Philadelphia, and for so important an object, and with such probability of complete success, brave all the hazards and hardships of a winter campaign. The soldiers were quite disheartened; the panic extended itself to the civil departments: the governor, council, assembly, and magistracy of New Jersey deserted their province; their brethren of Philadelphia dispersed; and the congress, expecting the speedy arrival of the British army, fled to Maryland. Three of the principal citizens, in the name of the rest, declared their resolution to entreat the protection of general Howe. The chief city of North America, the seat of the new government, appeared ready to submit, if the British army should advance. Alarmed at these dangers, congress did not, however, despair; they proceeded not only to repair their actual losses, but to remove the causes. Their soldiers had only been enlisted for a year; they now ordained that they should be levied for three years, or during the continuance of the war. The army was to consist of eighty-eight battalions, to be furnished and maintained by the respective colonies in a certain proportion, according to the ascertained ability of each. Li-

Consternation of the Americans.

They expect general Howe at Philadelphia.

Firmness of the congress.

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They ap-
peal to the
people.

beral offers were made of bounties and of pay, as an inducement to men to enlist; and an allotment of lands at the end of the war was promised to all who survived, or to the families of those who fell. They also published an appeal to the American people, to remind them of their assurances of protection and support; they recapitulated the various grievances which they had so often stated, and the rejection of all their applications for redress: nothing but unconditional submission would satisfy their enemies; the only alternatives were resistance or slavery,—which of the two were free-born brave men to choose? The success of the British arms, they alleged, had been greatly exaggerated, and cost very dear. They assured them of the assistance of foreign powers, and exhorted them to firm reliance and resistance; to prepare for a vigorous defence of their liberties, properties, and every object which could be dear to man. The appeal had the desired effect, it revived the spirits of the people, and stimulated the most astonishing efforts to procure reinforcements for the army.

Howe re-
tires into
winter
quarters.

WITH the zeal of the Americans, the wisdom and ability of their general most powerfully cooperated, not without being seconded by some unfortunate circumstances in the army of Britain. To the surprise of both friends and enemies, general Howe did not attempt to prosecute the success of his detachment, but retired into winter quarters. He so cantoned his troops that they could not easily be condensed, should a sudden occasion require them to act in concert; bodies of Hessians were quartered at Trenton and Bordenton, near the Delaware, and from knowing the reduced situation of the enemy, had given way to great laxity of discipline. Without being restrained by their officers, or by the commander in chief, they ravaged, plundered, and in short exercised every cruelty which could be expected from mercenary hirelings, who fought without sentiment or principle, merely as the instruments of a petty tyrant whose ways and means were the blood of his subjects. They revelled in the proceeds of rapine, and gave way to excesses so natural to men, who by indigence are usually debarred from the comforts of life, when they happen to obtain temporary abundance. New Jersey became scene of robbery, disorder, and

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The Americans are animated to offensive operations.

licentiousness. The Americans, while they dreaded the force, and abhorred the cruelties of Hessians, contemned their slavish submission to the most sordid despotism. Washington, perfectly informed of the Hessian laxity, projected to surprise their detachments at Trenton, and knowing the detestation and resentment with which his countrymen regarded men whom they considered as hirelings, purchased to butcher those who had done them no injury, encouraged them with the hopes of punishing those hated enemies before they should be aware of their danger. In order to prevent the division at Bordenton from affording any assistance to their countrymen at Trenton, he despatched a body of four hundred and fifty militia very lightly accoutred and armed to Mount Holly, in sight of the Hessian post, with orders not to fight, but to fly as soon as they had provoked their enemies to advance, and draw them to as great a distance as possible. The stratagem was successful: colonel Donop, who commanded that cantonment of Hessians, with the whole of his party, except eighty men left at the quarters, had proceeded twelve miles from his own station, and eighteen from Trenton. General Washington discerned that his absence was the fit moment for enterprise, and embraced the opportunity. He passed the Delaware, already almost frozen over, by forcing the boats through the ice, during the night after Christmas; and by day break on the 26th, surrounded the Hessian cantonment. The Germans were thrown into the greatest astonishment and confusion, and before they could be called to arms, Washington galled them with a heavy fire. Rhalle, the Hessian commander, assembled a considerable number of his troops, and was beginning to charge the enemy with great courage, when he received a mortal wound, on which his soldiers refused to continue the battle, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. The number of killed and wounded was considerable, but the prisoners amounted to nearly a thousand. This success proved very advantageous to the American cause, as it revived the spirits of the soldiers, and cooperated with the address of the congress, to encourage and stimulate the people. The Americans had particularly dreaded the Hessians, on account of their known warlike

Surprise the Hessians at Trenton.

Conquest, and effects of this success.

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discipline; but from seeing so many of them taken prisoners, their fears greatly decreased. The general and congress, with great judgment, paraded the prisoners through the streets of Philadelphia and other populous places, and thus promoted in the people a disposition to enlist. Notwithstanding this advantage, general Washington did not choose to encamp on the east side of the Delaware; he had not the smallest doubt that with such a superior force as he possessed, general Howe would re-occupy the posts in Jersey, and even cross the Delaware. Instead, however, of attempting to regain the position which was thus lost, the general directed colonel Donop to abandon his situation, and retire to Princeton. Washington, encouraged by movements so very different from what he apprehended, again crossed the river, and marched to Trenton at the head of four thousand men. It was now believed that general Howe would have taken the field immediately, but these expectations proved unfounded. Instead of marching with the main army, he sent lord Cornwallis to take command of the detachment in Jersey, while he himself remained quiet at New York. Lord Cornwallis no sooner arrived, than he marched to attack the enemy at Trenton. General Washington's object was to fatigue, harass, and distress the king's troops, without hazarding a battle. On the approach of the British detachment, therefore, he retired from the town, posting himself on some high grounds in the neighbourhood, and there seemed resolved to wait the assault of the enemy. Lord Cornwallis determined to force the post of the enemy; but the next morning, Washington, leaving his fires burning, and picquets advanced, retreated in profound silence; and taking a circuitous route, marched with a design to surprise a British detachment at Princeton, consisting of the seventeenth, fortieth, and fifty-fifth regiments, under lieutenant colonel Mawhood. This corps was preparing to follow lord Cornwallis, when Washington made his appearance, about sunrise. Mawhood immediately concluded that the American general was retreating from lord Cornwallis, and that by obstructing his march, he might afford the British troops from Trenton time to arrive. A foggy morning, and thick woods, pre-

vented him from discovering the number of the enemy : under these mistakes he resolved to hazard an action ; the fortieth regiment, which had not been included in the orders to march, was behind at Princeton ; and to that corps he sent immediate orders to join his party. Meanwhile the battle began, and a heavy discharge of British artillery did considerable execution ; the seventeenth regiment rushed forwards with fixed bayonets, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. The fifty-fifth and fortieth were not sufficiently advanced to support their fellow soldiers. Several, by their ardour, severed from the rest of the detachment ; the seventeenth, notwithstanding the great superiority of numbers, cut their way through the enemy, and retreated to Brunswick, with a loss of near one half of their number. The exploit of the seventeenth, just recorded, was considered as one of the most gallant achievements during the war. The field officers being all absent, captain Scott, who led the regiment, received just and very high applause for his conduct : the loss of the Americans, from the valour of that corps, was very considerable. Lord Cornwallis, discovering the retreat of the enemy, hastened to pursue them ; but Washington, though he kept so near the British troops as to give them full employment, did not hazard an engagement. The troops of Cornwallis, being broken with the toilsome warfare, he was obliged to retire to Brunswick to refresh his corps, and wait for the arrival of assistance from the commander in chief. Washington, meanwhile, overran Jersey, seized the principal towns, and secured the posts on the Delaware, by which means he commanded an easy passage for himself whenever it should be expedient to recross that river.

THE conduct and event of these winter operations proved very different from what the friends of Britain expected, and the provincials apprehended. It was conceived, that the general would have acted at the head of his whole combined army, instead of remaining unemployed himself, and parcelling his troops out in a great number of detachments. If, instead of preserving his force concentrated, and pressing forward on the enemy with its whole impulse, they must be spread into such a

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number of cantonments, it was thought the posts next to the enemy ought to have been the strongest, whereas they were the weakest. The Americans, with reason, dreaded that they would be overwhelmed by the British army ; directed by the conduct, and encouraged by the example of its commander in chief to activity and enterprise, but they found they had only to contend with partial detachments, while the main force and the general himself were stationary and inactive. The army of Washington did not amount to seven thousand militia, the army of general Howe to twenty-eight thousand disciplined troops : during six months, from the middle of this winter to the middle of the following summer, Washington remained upon the Delaware, within thirty miles of the British headquarters, without any attempts to dislodge him from his posts, or to proceed to the great object of the war.

Operations
on the
lakes.

THE plan of the campaign under general Carleton was, as we have seen, to drive the enemy from Canada, and afterwards proceed by the lakes to the northwestern parts of the province of New York, that he might cooperate with the main army, and have it in his power to invade either the northern or middle colonies as occasion might require ; that thus they could separate the southern from the northern provinces, enclose New York between the two armies, and thereby compel those provincials to surrender at discretion. We left the British generals at the capture of fort St. Johns in the end of June ; there an armament was prepared for crossing lake Champlain, in order to besiege Crown Point, and Ticonderoga. The Americans had a considerable fleet on lake Champlain, whereas the British had not a single vessel. It was necessary, in order to gain a superiority, to prepare thirty fishing sloops, and to equip them with cannon. The general used every effort to procure the requisite naval force : the largest of the vessels were brought from England, and were afterwards obliged to be taken in pieces and reconstructed, in order to answer their purpose upon the lake. It was necessary also to transport over land, and drag up the rapid current of St. Therese and St. Johns, with thirty long boats, a great number of flat

boats of great burden, a gondola weighing thirty tons, and about four hundred batteaux. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the undertaking, and the complexity of the labour and impediments, such was the ardour and activity of the British troops that it was finished in three months. By this time, however, the season was far advanced; not only lake Champlain and lake George were to be encountered, and an unknown force on each subdued, and Crown Point and Ticonderago captured; but, after these difficulties were overcome, a wild and desolate country covered with intricate forests, indented with swamps and morasses, was to be pervaded, in order to arrive at Albany, and open a communication with general Howe. October was begun before the fleet was ready to oppose the Americans on lake Champlain: the naval force consisted of the Inflexible, which was reconstructed at St. Johns in twenty-eight days, and mounted eighteen twelve-pounders; one schooner mounting fourteen, and another twelve six-pounders; a flatbottomed batteau, carrying six twenty-four, and the same number of twelve-pounders, besides howitzers; and a gondola, with seven nine-pounders: twenty gunboats, carrying either field pieces, or howitzers, were furnished in the same manner. There was besides a great number of large boats for transporting the troops, provisions, stores, and other necessaries.* The American force was by no means equal to the British: they had made the most skilful use of their materials, but they wanted timber and artillery: their fleet amounted to fifteen vessels, commanded by Arnold. On the 11th of October, the British fleet, conducted by captain Pringle, and under the general direction of Carleton, discovered the armament of the enemy posted to defend the passage between the island of Valicour and the western main. An engagement commenced, and continued on both sides for several hours with great intrepidity: the unfavourableness of the wind prevented the chief ships of the British from taking a share in the fight. Night approaching, it was thought prudent to discontinue the action; they were accordingly withdrawn, but not before the strongest of the enemy's ships was run aground, and one of their gon-

* See Gazettes.

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Crown
Point is taken,

but evacuated.

General
result of
the campaign.

dolas sunk. Arnold, sensible of the insufficiency of his strength, retreated during the night: the British fleet pursued them the next day, and the day following; and the wind being favourable for bringing all the ships into action, overtook them a few leagues from Crown Point. The American commander, unable to avoid an engagement, made the best disposition which his force permitted: about noon the battle began, and continued with great fury for two hours; but at length the superior force and skill of the British prevailed. The provincials burnt several of the ships, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the English. On the 15th of October the British fleet anchored off Crown Point, and the enemy retired to Ticonderago. General Carleton remained at Crown Point till the third of November; and as the winter was commencing, he did not think it advisable to besiege Ticonderago. Some of his officers wished the attempt to have been made immediately on his arrival at Crown Point. The distance was only fifteen miles, and the garrison, they conceived would not hold out ten days against the British force. General Carleton, however, thought the capture of that place might be attended with considerable loss, while the benefit arising from it would be immaterial during the current campaign, because so late in the season they could not think of entering upon lake George, and proceeding to Albany. From the difficulty of subsistence, a garrison could not easily be maintained during the winter; and thus, though taken, it would be necessary to evacuate it again, and leave it to the enemy. Though these arguments did not convince the other officers, yet they determined general Carleton to reembark the army, and return to St. Johns; whence he distributed his army into winter quarters.

Thus of the three great objects of the campaign of 1776, the southern expedition totally failed, and the other two were but partially obtained. The Canadian armament achieved only the reduction of Crown Point: general Howe acquired possession of Long Island, and New York, with part of the Jerseys. His operations had very little impaired the resources of the enemy; on the other hand, by allowing them to gain unexpected advantages,

he had animated hope, inspirited courage, promoted firmness and unanimity, and afforded them a fair prospect of ultimate success.

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Depredations of
American
privateers.

DURING this year the American privateers were extremely active and successful. The West India islands, as had been predicted, were in great distress by the interclusion of commerce with America. The most essential necessaries of life, especially Indian corn, the principal food of the negroes and of the poor and laborious whites, had risen from three to four times the customary price. Slaves, next in importance and necessity, were not to be procured in sufficient quantity for any sum; and other wants and distresses multiplied. In this period of calamity, a conspiracy was formed for an insurrection of negroes in Jamaica, most of the soldiers having been drafted to America. One hundred and twenty sail of merchantmen were about to depart for Europe, and the conspirators had fixed on their departure as the proper time for carrying the plot into execution, as the island would then be still more defenceless. The conspiracy was brought to light a few days before the fleet actually sailed, and the ships were retained until it was effectually crushed, and order restored. This detention was afterwards attended with very ruinous effects. The American privateers had, during the former part of the summer, been very active and successful; and as the increase of captures enlarged the capitals of the adventurers for more distant enterprises, they extended the scene of their depredations. A considerable part of this rich fleet fell into the hands of the provincials; and encouraged by such an acquisition, they afterwards sent cruisers to the West Indies, which captured many other ships. The planters and merchants were almost ruined by the complicated evils that resulted to them from the war. The merchants who had traded to America, continued to be great sufferers, not only by the loss of trade, but by the detention of their property which was no longer remitted. Towards the end of the year, American ships infested the coasts of Europe, and seizing the British traders distressed other merchants. The provincial privateers found refuge, protection, and encouragement from France, notwithstanding the professions of amity.

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British nation still favourable to coercive measures—various causes of this disposition.—Conspiracy and trial of John the Painter.—Meeting of parliament.—King's speech—debate.—Motion for a revision of acts obnoxious to the Americans, in conformity to general Howe's proclamation—rejected—secession of members.—Letters of marque, &c.—Reprisal bill.—Bill for seizing suspected persons; in which lord Nor'h, wishing to please both parties, satisfies neither.—Important amendments, through Mr. Dunning, passed.—Affairs of India—nabob of Arcot, council of Madras, and rajah of Tanjore.—Lord Pigot sent out—conspiracy against him, executed by colonel Stuart—proceedings thereon in the India house—in parliament—seceding members return—lord Chatham's motion for terminating the war—rejected—difference of opinion among opposition concerning American independence.—Unexpected demand from Hesse Cassel.—Prorogation of parliament.

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The nation is still favourable to the war. Various causes of this disposition.

DESTRUCTIVE as the manifold losses which we have been relating were to the mercantile interest, yet the nation in general continued favourable to the war. The declaration of independence separated from the cause of the Americans persons who had before regarded them as oppressed and suffering fellow-subjects: these now contended that the question no longer was, "Have our brethren been well or ill treated? but shall we not reduce our declared enemies? As long as they acknowledged themselves subjects of the British constitution, we wished them to enjoy all the rights and privileges which our excellent polity confers and secures; but now they have renounced connexion, and declared hostility to this country, we, as Britons, must oppose the enemies of Britain." By this species of reasoning, extended farther than the subject of the analogy justified, they inferred, that the parental au-

authority extended to the control of the property eventually acquired by the children through their own ability, industry, and skill. The asserted ingratitude they enhanced, by alleging, that the preceding war was commenced and carried on for the sake of these colonies, and that they were debtors to us for all those efforts by which we had vanquished the enemy, and secured our American settlements. No arguments were more frequently repeated by the censurers of American resistance, than this charge of ingratitude; the weight of which so obviously depends, not on the benefit conferred, but on the motives for rendering the service. The hostilities that commenced in 1755, arose on one side from a determination to prevent France from being aggrandized at our expense, and to repress encroachments upon colonies which were so beneficial to Britain. The consideration of filial duty led to parental dignity as well as claims; zeal for the maintenance of British authority and supremacy induced many a loyal and patriotic subject to reprobate the Americans; and not doubting that our demands were founded in right, and conducive to honour, they did not examine whether this assertion of our alleged rights would not be overbalanced by the expense and danger of the contest; and in spite of the experience which they had already received in the course of two very costly years, still regarded the reduction of the colonies as a *profitable* object. The ministerial system they conceived would greatly diminish our national burdens: on a balance of accounts, we should find ourselves gainers by the war; besides those who from public motives approved of the contest, there were not wanting men who supported it from private interest; the certainty, or believed probability, of acquiring lucrative contracts, or other profits from the war, which they could not expect in peace. The multitude were, as usual, directed by authority: the greater number of peers, and of the principal gentry, were staunch supporters of the ministry; and, in addition to their immediate dependents connected with them by the ties of interest, there were many more who, either from attachment, admiration of rank and fortune, or vanity, were influenced by their opinions, followed their example, praised the measures and conduct of ministry,

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and reviled the Americans and the British opponents of administration. Great numbers felt resentment and indignation at the ingratitude and insolence which they imputed to the colonists, for resisting such reasonable demands of their benefactors, under whose fostering care they had been reared to their present strength: they formed analogies from the returns incumbent in filial duty for parental affection, and support bestowed in the days of inability to provide for themselves. From these various causes, and probably others, a large majority of the people of all ranks at this time approved of the American war throughout the nation. Those who still continued to censure the compulsory system that had been adopted towards the colonies, if far less numerous, were by no means deficient in respectability; among these, besides the partisans of parliamentary opposition, were some of the chief gentlemen and a great number of the smaller landholders in English counties; a considerable portion of independent merchants, who neither possessed nor expected contracts from government, and found commerce injured by the war; manufacturers in similar circumstances; protestant dissenters, the ardent friends of civil and religious liberty, who carried their zeal perhaps farther than was consistent with order; the ablest of English counsellors who held no office under government, but who, relying on personal efforts, and having no motives to be expectants of donatives, free and independent by their talents, were the friends of constitutional liberty. Literary men did not then constitute so numerous a class as they have since become: lord North, a scholar and a man of taste, was a friend to literature, and some of the ablest writers, and many of subordinate rank, were patronized by the court; though individuals of superior celebrity were adverse to the measures of government, yet authors, as a body, could not be said to be hostile to a ministry which held genius and learning in high estimation. The clergy of England were in general friendly to administration: of the Scottish church, except a few, by office, sinecure, or pension, connected with government, the men of most ability and influence were inimical to the stamp act, and all the subsequent proceedings of the compulsory system; and though they did not justify the wisdom of

the American declaration of independence, yet imputed it to the united rashness, violence, and weakness of the British cabinet. From continued contrariety of sentiment, a general virulence prevailed between the supporters and censurers of the ministerial system; and to the charge of erroneous reasoning, the parties very often reciprocally added the accusation of corrupt and even flagitious motives, by which there is no evidence, and little probability, that the greater number of either side were actuated. An incident which happened about this time caused very great alarm through the kingdom, produced very contrary constructions from the opposite parties, and from both, as far as we have any evidence, interpretations very different from the truth.

NEAR the close of this year, the ropehouse at Portsmouth was set on fire, and the perpetrator, when discovered, exhibited a singular instance of human depravity: this was James Aitken, destined to immortal infamy under the name of John the Painter. According to his own confession, this man, though only four-and-twenty years of age, had committed a surprising number and variety of atrocious acts, with a secrecy which long escaped detection, with a perseverance which manifested a firmness and constancy of enormity rarely to be found in the annals of crimes, and with a machination that displayed a very considerable portion of ingenuity. Totally unsocial in his villany, he by solitary guilt precluded an usual source of impeachment in the confession of accomplices, and at last incurred by circumstantial evidence the long merited punishment which from his insulated wickedness no direct testimony could sanction. Aitken was born in Edinburgh, and bred a painter; of a melancholy temper, a gloomy disposition, and ardent passions, he had a strong propensity to vice, and sought his own sole gratification. Having no pleasure in the converse of other men, he found no charms in convivial profligacy and associated turpitude. Very early in life he had been seized with a desire of wandering, and exploring in other countries the means and opportunities of wickedness. About three years before this time he had betaken himself to America, where he had imbibed a mortal antipathy to his country, and form-

Conspiracy
and trial of
John the
painter.

ed the extravagant design of subverting the government, and destroying the nation which he so much abhorred. He projected to annihilate the maritime force of England, as well as her internal riches and strength, by burning the royal dockyards, the principal trading cities and towns, with their respective shipping. He traversed the kingdom to discover the state and accessibility of the several docks, and found them in general not rigidly guarded: he took great pains to construct fire-works, machines, and combustibles: he attempted the great hemphouse at Portsmouth, but failed: he succeeded in setting fire to the ropehouse, and having immediately set off for London, from Portsdown-hill feasted his diabolical malignity with contemplating the dreadful conflagration, which from its prodigious appearance he imagined to have extended to all the docks, magazines, and buildings. He made similar attempts at Plymouth and at Bristol, but fortunately without success. In pervading the country to execute his designs, he committed robberies, burglaries, and rapes. At last, some intimation of his conduct, with a description of his person, reached the chief police magistrate, sir John Fielding, and he was apprehended for a burglary. No evidence appearing to establish the charge, he was on the point of being dismissed, when some circumstances excited a suspicion against him as an incendiary: being examined by the privy council and the lords of the admiralty, he behaved with great caution and presence of mind, and baffled all their attempts to discover the truth. At last another painter sent to him in confinement, insinuated himself into his confidence and procured an acknowledgment of designs and acts which proved eventually a clue to the whole labyrinth of his guilt. He was tried at Portsmouth, and the chain of circumstances being so strong as to prevent the possibility of doubt, though he himself displayed great ingenuity, acuteness, and dexterity, in rebutting obvious inferences, the jury, without leaving the court, adjudged him guilty. Finding death inevitable, he made a full confession of his manifold iniquities, and acknowledged the justness of his condemnation. In detailing his own acts, he asserted that going to Paris, he had informed Mr. Silas Dean, an agent

from America, of his project to burn the English docks, and had been promised a great reward if he should execute his attempts.

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THE facts and circumstances brought to light by or through this miscreant gave full scope to the rage and virulence of both parties. Supporters of the ministerial system attributed the acts of Aitken to the instigation of American and republican partisans within the kingdom; their opponents, no less bigotted, considered the alleged discoveries as the inventions or exaggerations of tories, in order to bring whigs and liberty into discredit. There was not the smallest shadow of probability that either party was concerned with John the Painter, or was any farther to blame than for credulity and illiberal comments. Various hypotheses, however, respecting this despicable person, constituted the principal subject of discussion, declamation and invective, to the inferior adherents both of ministers and opposition for several months; so readily do the zealous votaries of party believe improbable stories, and adopt absurd opinions, when agreeable to their favourite notions.

ON the 31st of October parliament assembled. His majesty's speech informed them, that so daring and desperate was now the spirit of American leaders, whose object had always been dominion and power, that they had openly renounced all allegiance to the crown, and all political connexion with the country, rejected with indignity and insult our offers of conciliation, and had presumed to set up their rebellious confederacies as independent communities. Were American treason suffered to take root, it would prove pernicious to the loyal colonies, to the commerce and political interests of the kingdom, and to the present system of all Europe. One advantage to be expected from the open avowal of this object, would be at home the general prevalence of unanimity, and a conviction that the measures pursued by government were necessary. The events of the campaign afforded the strongest hopes of ultimate success; but the delays unavoidable in commencing operations, prevented the progress from being complete. Other courts continued to assure the king of their amicable dispositions; nevertheless, in the present

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Parliament.
The king's
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situation of affairs, it was expedient to put the kingdom in a respectable state of defence. He regretted the expense necessarily attendant on our present situation, but doubted not that the commons would cheerfully grant the supplies that might be wanted for such momentous purposes. His sole object was to promote the true interest of all his subjects; no people ever lived under a milder government, or enjoyed more happiness, than the revolted colonies, as was demonstrated by their population, arts, wealth, and the strength by sea and land, which now gave them confidence to contend with the mother country. Addresses being framed according to the usual form of complimentary repetition, produced very vehement debates, and motions of amendment diametrically opposite to the original propositions. The opponents of ministers asserted, that the disaffection and revolt of a whole people could not have taken place without error or misconduct in their former rulers; they repeated their objections to the present system of measures, imputed to them pernicious effects, and contended that nothing could restore Britain and America to their former happy state and relations, but a total change both of counsels and counsellors. Nothing could be more inconsistent with a proper spirit in parliament, than an attempt to bend British subjects to an abject unconditional submission to any power whatever; to annihilate their liberties, and subdue them to servile principles and passive habits by means of foreign mercenaries. Amidst the excesses (it was said) which have happened, we ought to respect the spirit and principles which so evidently bear an exact analogy to those that supported the most valuable part of our own constitution. The speech had asserted, that the prosperous state of America was owing to the mild government and fostering protection of Britain: they admitted the proposition, but a necessary consequence of the truth was, that those who had wantonly changed so beneficial a system deserved the severest censure. The Americans had been charged with implicitly obeying arbitrary leaders: Who were these tyrants? In no country of great population and power was there so near an equality between individuals, or so little of dependence; in situations, wherein labour was extremely productive even to

the lowest operator, a very moderate share of industry produced an ample subsistence, and removed the cause which in other countries so often rendered the lower classes retainers to some patron in the higher. As the general prevalence of independent and easy subsistence precluded the necessity of abject submission to wealth, the want of nobility prevented the authority annexed in other countries to rank and title. The provincials had no motives to yield to the authority of adventitious distinctions: Mr. Hancock, their civil president, was a plain merchant, of fair character, who possessed no influence over the people beyond that which arose from the trouble caused by British administration. Mr. Washington was a country gentleman of a great landed estate, such as several private gentlemen possess in every county in England; respectable in his own district, but little known beyond its limits before the situation of his country called him from obscurity. Others, now most eminent in the field and congress, would have been still more obscure, had not the oppressive acts of Britain stimulated the public exertion of their abilities: in circumstances rendering resistance necessary to preserve their liberties, they naturally reposed their chief confidence in virtue and ability; they acknowledged the power of talents and qualifications; listened to the advice which they thought wisest and most patriotic, from their own delegates and agents; and followed their counsels with a willing ratification, and not an extorted obedience. The persons represented by ministers as governing the Americans with despotical tyranny, were no other than their own officers and servants, appointed by their will, and removable at their pleasure. The conciliatory offers, in themselves totally inadequate to the case, had not been brought forward until the whole system declaring them rebels and enemies, and denouncing the vengeance due to such, had full time and scope for operation. The amicable and pacific professions of other powers deserved no reliance, while they were really assisting the Americans, and making powerful preparations both by sea and land. Respecting the required unanimity, ministers could not be serious. "We (continued their opponents) predicted the mischiefs which have since actually arisen, because we reprobated

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“ ministerial proceedings as pernicious; and though they
 “ have really proved more fatal than we represented, yet
 “ we are called upon to give our approbation and support.”

MINISTERS contended, that “ the American declara-
 “ tion of independence had entirely destroyed the grounds
 “ on which they had been formerly supported in parlia-
 “ ment. Our colonies enabled us to hold a principal place
 “ among the chief powers of Europe; deprived of these
 “ settlements, we should be reduced to a state of humilia-
 “ tion and dependence. Should we ingloriously relinquish
 “ our present situation, or by a vigorous exertion retain
 “ our usual power and splendour? Besides interest and
 “ safety, indignation and resentment ought to rouse the
 “ British spirit to chastise the ingratitude and insolence of
 “ the American rebels. Though the atrociousness of their
 “ crimes would justify any severity of punishment, it was
 “ still wished to treat them with lenity, when brought to
 “ a knowledge of their condition, and a sense of their
 “ duty. Designing and ambitious leaders never could
 “ have succeeded in instigating the Americans to hostility
 “ and a declaration of independence, if their disobedient
 “ and rebellious spirit had not been fomented and nourish-
 “ ed by aspiring and factious men in this country, who
 “ sacrificed loyalty and patriotism to their own selfish and
 “ unjustifiable projects. The opponents of ministers in
 “ parliament having hitherto avowedly regulated their con-
 “ duct on the supposition that the Americans never de-
 “ signed or even desired independence, were now bound
 “ to support, with the utmost vigour, measures necessary
 “ for their reduction.” The votes in favour of ministry
 were nearly as numerous as usual, but in debate the ani-
 mation of their friends was not so ardent; the hopes of an
 immediate reduction of America they saw were not ful-
 filled; another campaign must be encountered, very great
 expense must be incurred, and foreign powers would pro-
 bably interfere in the protracted contest.

THE declaration of American independence placed the
 supporters of the colonists in a situation never before
 known in the history of parliament; the Americans were
 no longer fellow-subjects complaining of grievances, but a
 separate state engaged in hostilities with this country.

Parliamentary annals do not before this session afford an instance of a party in our senate avowedly defending the cause of a power with which our country was at war, with the approbation of both the senate and nation. Members may have censured either the impolicy or precipitancy of intended hostilities^y, but after they were actually commenced, have abstained from such opposition, as tending to inspirit the enemy, and to dishearten their countrymen. They have objected to specific plans for carrying on the war, and censured instances of rash or feeble execution; but their animadversions were confined to management without extending to origin: they showed themselves aware that when a powerful state is once involved in a war, the only effectual means of honourable and secure extrication are vigorous efforts; but the opponents of ministers at this period took a different course, and however prudent and just their exertions might be while they tended to avert war, they became much more questionable in point of expediency, from the time that the colonies separated themselves from the mother country.

A FEW days after the introductory debate, lord John Cavendish having produced a copy of the proclamation issued by lord Howe and his brother on the capture of New York, proposed that in conformity to its promises, the house should resolve itself into a committee for revising the acts by which the Americans thought themselves aggrieved. Ministers replied, that the proffered redress of grievances was intended only for those who should return to their duty. A disavowal of independence and an acknowledgment of British supremacy were requisite, on the part of the colonies, before any conciliatory measures could be adopted by Britain. The proclamation was perfectly conformable to the general spirit of all our proceedings; sanctioned by great majorities in parliament, it assured protection and the maintenance of their constitutional rights to those who should return to their duty, but vindicated the authority and dignity of this country. To revise and repeal laws with a view to redress the grievan-

Motion for a revision of acts obnoxious to the Americans, in conformity to general Howe's proclamation.

^y In the Dutch war undertaken by the mean and profligate Charles, not merely a party, but the parliament and nation were averse to hostilities.

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ces of a people, who, denying the authority of such laws, could not be aggrieved by their existence, would be grossly absurd and nugatory. If they persisted in their renunciation of dependence, there was no doubt, from our force and our recent successes, that we could soon reduce them to submission. Although the ministerial argument, that it was absurd to debate upon the degree of authority to be exercised over men who denied the asserted right of exercising any, was fair; yet their assertion, that this proclamation offered no more than preceding acts of the legislature and executive government, was not equally just; before, they had promised amnesty to unconditional submission; in this paper they had proposed a condition, in compliance with which a revision of obnoxious laws and a redress of grievances were proffered. In the course of the debate, ministers, though they agreed in opposing the motion, took different grounds. Lord North dwelt chiefly on conciliation, which he appeared to think the commissioners might effectuate: lord George Germaine, and other speakers, trusted chiefly to compulsion, as the only means of driving out of them their spirit of independence. Opposition did not fail to observe and mention their diversity, which, indeed, had very frequently been discovered; but that body itself, without harmony and system, notwithstanding the great abilities of several members, and the extraordinary powers of some, did not so effectually counteract the schemes of ministers, as it might have done by unanimity and concert. In debating this question, the speeches of opposition rather indicated than showed the difference of opinion concerning American independence, which afterwards became manifest, and even produced a political schism among the opponents of the North administration. Mr. Burke and the Rockingham party early intimated a wish to treat with America without questioning her independence: Mr. Fox had joined opposition through no party connexion, but chiefly associated with Mr. Burke and his political friends, and adopted many of their principles and doctrines; he agreed to this opinion, avowed it with his usual openness, and supported it with his usual force. Mr. Dunning, colonel Barré, lords Camden, Shelburne, and Temple, and others connected with

the earl of Chatham, wished to treat with America, but to maintain the supremacy of Britain.

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AFTER the rejection of this motion, many of the minority especially of the Rockingham party, withdrew from the house when any question respecting America was discussed ; they attended on ordinary business, but when that was despatched, retired. They said they were wearied with opposing reason and argument to power and numbers without any effect. This secession was by no means approved by opposition in general, many even loudly blamed such proceedings. A member of parliament, they asserted, consistent with his duty, cannot withdraw himself from the business of parliament, merely from an opinion that he will be outvoted, and ought not thence to infer that his attendance must be useless ; though by vigilance they did not procure a majority, they were not without effect, as by discovering and exposing the absurdity and mischievous tendency of measures, they could often modify, if they did not prevent, pernicious laws and counsels. Some acknowledged, that the whole body of the minority might secede jointly but that members ought not to absent themselves separately ; and in support of this opinion they rather quoted precedents than adduced arguments. In 1738, Mr. Pitt, and the whole opposition to sir Robert Walpole, had on the ratification of the Spanish convention, absented themselves from parliament. The defenders of individual secession contended, that, in cases of imminent danger to the constitution, such conduct might operate as a call to the nation, and awaken the people to a real sense of their condition : its assailants insisted, that whoever was fit for being an useful member of parliament, must derive his utility not from inaction but from effort ; that by his presence he might lessen the evil of hurtful propositions, though he could not amend them by his absence. They appealed to experience to prove the beneficial amendments which ministerial motions often underwent from the strictures of opposition, so as to be rendered more innocent before they passed into laws.

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Secession
of mem-
bers.

AFTER the proposed revision of obnoxious acts, no political question of material magnitude engaged the attention of parliament until the expiration of the Christmas recess.

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Letters of
marque
and retri-
butal bill.

In the beginning of February, a bill was introduced by lord North, for granting letters of marque and reprisals against American ships, which passed the house of commons without opposition ; in the house of lords it underwent the small alteration of inserting the word *permission* instead of *marque*, the latter being supposed applicable only to foreign enemies.

Bill for
seizing sus-
picious
persons.

ANOTHER bill proposed soon after by the minister, excited severe animadversion in parliament, and great alarm among the people ; this was a law to enable his majesty to secure and detain persons *suspected* of treason, committed either in America or on the high seas, or *accused* of piracy. By the bill, persons so charged or suspected were liable to be imprisoned in a common gaol or any other place of confinement within his majesty's dominions, there to remain without either bail, or the privilege of demanding a trial to ascertain the charges. The law was to comprehend crimes supposed to be generated in these realms, though committed abroad, and the penalties were to extend to all at home, by whom they should be suspected to be suggested or encouraged. The law was to continue in force for a year ; and thus any man asserted to be suspected of these crimes might at the pleasure of ministers, be detained in prison at home, or even sent to our foreign settlements ; deprived of his liberty, or doomed to banishment, without any investigation of his case. Every British subject might be alleged to be an object of suspicion ; his liberty therefore, the enjoyment of his friends and native country, the exercise of his talents, industry and skill, might depend upon the permission of administration. Mr. Dunning first discovered and exposed the nature and tendency of this proposition : it might, he proved, operate not only as a suspension of the *habeas corpus*, but as a temporary banishment to persons against whom there was no evidence of criminal conduct. It was contrary to the spirit of laws and a free constitution, "founded in arbitrary principles, and fitted to produce tyrannical consequences : these positions he established by a recital of its various provisions, and an enumeration of its obvious effects. The strongest objections being already adduced, Mr. Fox followed the

probable operation of the law through a great variety of cases, and by his luminous eloquence illustrated its injustice and impolicy. Recurring to its principle, he inferred it to be an index of a general design long formed for changing the constitution of this country, and executed as opportunities served, circumstances suited, and power increased. To support their motion, ministers employed the usual topics; in dangerous situations it is necessary to strengthen the hands of government, and impossible to carry on public business without delegating power to the crown, which would be improper in seasons of tranquillity. The apprehensions from the operation implied a want of that confidence in ministers, without which they could not perform their official duties; should the authority intrusted to the executive government for a specific and indispensable purpose be abused, the means of redress were easy; parliament could not only withhold future reliance, but prosecute past malversation. To these common arguments, the luminaries of the law and eloquence urged their objections with a force which lord North saw it was in vain to combat; he was moreover informed that great fears were entertained by the people from the proposed law: to satisfy all parties, his characteristic dexterity gave such an explanation of his purposes, as permitted a very material change in the bill. Perceiving the minister begin to relax, Mr. Dunning offered two amendments; the one circumscribing the objects, the other the penalties of the law. After a long discussion, it was agreed that the bill should extend to none who were not out of the kingdom when the offences were committed, and that the confinement should be in no part of his majesty's dominions but within this realm. Lord North, in admitting these changes, declared that the present state of the bill corresponded with his principles and objects; and that he was sorry if any ambiguity of expression excited a different opinion: he hoped the present correction would satisfy gentlemen in opposition, and that the law would meet universal approbation. While the minister thus strove to please both parties, he, as is usually the case, satisfied neither; opposition thought he conceded too little, many of the ministerial party that he conceded too much; and that to render

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The bill is
passed.The trans-
action
which
turned the
public at-
tention to
the affairs
of India.
The nabob
of Arcot.

the bill agréable to his political adversaries, he deviated from the intent with which it was designed by his coadjutors. Lord North, indeed, often rendered it evident, that on very important questions he either did not originally agree with some of his own colleagues, or that, in the progress of a discussion, he fluctuated between contrary opinions. His education had rendered him a tory; his situation and many concurrent circumstances made him the official promoter of coercion, but his temper and disposition inclined him to mildness and conciliation. If any of his measures were imperious or arbitrary, their severity and harshness arose, not from a mind dictatorial and tyrannical, but too yielding and indulgent, and which, from excessive pliancy, too often gave way to understandings far inferior to his own. The bill, with the alterations, passed the house of commons; and being carried to the peers, occasioned neither debate nor amendment. The peers of opposition absented themselves so generally, that the only protesting opponent was lord Abingdon.

THE attention of the nation for several years had been almost solely engrossed by the American contest; but a transaction on the coast of Coromandel now attracted the regard of the public to the East Indies.

AT the treaty of Paris, France had been obliged to admit Sallabat Sing as lawful soubah of the Decan; Mahomed Ali Cawn, as lawful nabob of the Carnatic, or of Arcot. This prince had ever since cultivated a very close intercourse with the civil and military powers of the English presidency at Madras, and resided in the fortress. He displayed vigorous ability, enterprise, and ambition; and formed a considerable army, which he disciplined by British officers. His expensive establishment and munificent gifts to the company's servants, had greatly exhausted his treasures; but his donations and character acquired an influence in the council, through which, with the assistance of his forces, he did not doubt that he would soon supply the deficiencies. Accordingly a joint project was concerted by the nabob and his friends of the British presidency; this was an expedition to Tanjore. Fulgee, rajah of Tanjore, was a Gentoo prince, near cape Comorin, whose ancestors had never been conquered by the

Mahomedan invaders of Hindostan: they were, however, obliged to pay a tribute. He himself had been for many years, and then was, in alliance with both the English and the nabob, and held his dominions under their joint guarantee. When the mogul granted to the English such extensive powers, and they formed such arrangements as would render them most profitable, it was resolved that Mahomed Ali Cawn should be appointed to collect a revenue due to his superior, and that a considerable sum should be allowed to himself for agency. After this nomination, a great variety of pecuniary transactions took place between Mahomed and the king of Tanjore. The nabob applied to Fulgee for the revenue that was due; the rajah alleged that he had a right to deduct sums owing to him by the other, on the balance of their private accounts. The nabob insisted on the immediate payment of the whole revenue, and proposed to refer their own concerns to subsequent consideration. Fulgee repeated his proposals for the deduction, and pleaded his inability by any other means to pay the demand. The nabob applied to the government at Madras, and engaged the presidency to support him, by invading Tanjore with the company's forces. The event of this convention was, that the rajah was despoiled of his riches, and his subjects were plundered.² The proceeds of this incursion amounted to about five millions sterling; and the chief part of the booty was divided among the company's servants. When the news of this expedition reached England, the East India directors manifested great displeasure against the plunderers of Tanjore, and concerted measures for making all possible restitution to the injured rajah. For that purpose, they sent out as governor to Madras, lord Pigot, so highly respected for his able and effectual defence of it seventeen years before against the French; to him the company were indebted for preserving its possessions in that part of India. His civil government was no less distinguished than his military exploits, and his private character procured him extensive esteem. The English presidency, meanwhile, prepared to guard against the con-

Lord Pigot
is sent to
India.

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Conspira-
cy against
him,executed
by colonel
Stuart.

sequences of their late acts ; and the nabob was still more anxiously making provisions for not only retaining what he had already acquired, but for securing, through his friends at Madras, the perpetual possession of the kingdom of Tanjore. Lord Pigot arrived in the latter end of 1775, and was violently opposed by the majority of the council and the commander in chief, in executing the proposed plans of reform. Notwithstanding these obstacles, he succeeded so far as to restore the king of Tanjore to his ancient and hereditary dominions. This act of justice enraged the nabob, who, with his son, an impetuous and daring youth, joined the most avowedly violent of their friends in the presidency. Lord Pigot thought it of the highest moment to send a proper officer to restore the king of Tanjore ; but the majority of the council opposed the appointment of the person whom he nominated for that purpose, and contended that their board had a right to act, notwithstanding the dissent of the governor. Pigot contended, that the governor was a part in every legal and orderly act of government. His lordship finding, as he affirmed, that the sole principle of the council was to traverse all his endeavours to carry the orders of the company into execution, embraced a very strong measure : having put the question, he, by his own casting vote, suspended two of the council ; and, by his supreme authority, put the commander in chief under arrest. Enraged at these proceedings, the secluded members, together with the nabob and his son, formed a plot for securing the person of the president, and effecting a revolution in the government, which should place the power entirely in their own hands. By the confinement of sir Robert Fletcher, colonel Stuart succeeded to the immediate command of the forces. This gentleman was extremely intimate with the governor, to whom he appeared warmly attached ; nevertheless, he was closely connected with the suspended members and their adherents. Becoming an accomplice in their conspiracy, he, by his military power and personal ability, was a formidable accession to their party. Stuart was aware that violence offered to the governor's person by the troops within the precincts of the fortress, would involve the actors in the capital penalties of the mutiny

laws ; but by means of his professed friendship, he was able to invent a stratagem for seizing the person of the governor, without incurring the legal criminality. On the 24th of August 1776, colonel Stuart spent the day at the house of lord Pigot,^a and was entertained with all the cordiality that a host could exert to a visitant / whom he thought his sincere and affectionate friend. The guest, complaining of the excessive heat of the fortress, and observing his entertainer also affected by it, advised him to spend the night at a villa belonging to the governor, and, as an inducement, offered to accompany him in the excursion. The governor being persuaded, they set out together : when they were beyond the precincts of the fort, his lordship, according to the concert of his guest and professed friend with his avowed enemies, was met by an officer and a party of sepoys, rudely and violently dragged out of the chaise, carried prisoner to the Mount, and strongly guarded. Public orders, signed by the principal conspirators, were issued, by which immediate death was denounced on all who should attempt his rescue. The conspirators and their friends, under a course of legal forms, assumed the whole power of government. Representations of these transactions were immediately transmitted by the different parties to Europe ; and the nabob, who had taken so active a share in the disturbances, sent a gentleman as his agent both to the company and ministers. A court of proprietors having considered the business, recommended to the directors to reinstate lord Pigot, and punish those who had dispossessed him of his power. The directors were not so decided in their opinion as their constituents : they voted indeed for the restoration of lord Pigot, and the suspension of the conspirators from their offices ; but they also resolved, that his lordship's conduct had been reprehensible in several instances. When they reconsidered the business, it was evident that their opinions were much farther distant from those of the proprietors, than at first. The agents of the ruling party at Madras, and the commissioners from the nabob, had by this time pressed

Proceed-
ings there-
on in the
India
house.

^a Annual Register, 1777, p. 252, 255 ; and in detail in the evidence before the company.

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In parlia-
ment.The sece-
ders return
to the
house.

their arguments and statements with a force and effect which weakened the professions that had produced the late resolutions. Government also had listened with such attention to the accounts of the prevailing party, as to have become manifestly favourable to the opposers of lord Pigot. On the 9th of May, the question being again discussed in the India house,^b it was determined that the governor should be restored, but that he and the council of Madras should be ordered home, and their respective conduct undergo a legal scrutiny. From this determination governor Johnstone appealed to the house of commons, and moved for resolutions expressing strong approbation of the conduct of lord Pigot, condemning the proceedings of his opponents, and annulling the resolution. The seceders were now returned to the house, and, with the rest of the party, supported the motion of governor Johnstone. The adherents of ministry censured the conduct of lord Pigot, as well as his opponents, and contended, that in such circumstances it was right and equitable to bring both parties to England, where only a just and impartial inquiry into their conduct could be carried into execution. By the restoration of lord Pigot, the dignity of government would be supported and established ; but he had abused his trust, and violated the constitution of the company, therefore his removal was equally just and necessary. Opposition justified the conduct of the governor, and insisted that the proceedings toward him amounted to an insurrection against established government. Mr. Burke displayed the atrocity of inferior servants toward a superior, who was promoting the honour and interests of their mutual master ; and entered very deeply into the conduct of the nabob of Arcot, and the corrupt and dangerous influence acquired not only at Madras but in this country by that ambitious prince. The British government had espoused his cause, and that of his factious adherents : administration, by becoming the tools of this nabob, and countenancing schemes destructive to the interests of the company, had rendered it absolutely necessary for parliament to interfere for the security and preservation of India.

^b See proceedings of the India house respecting lord Pigot.

These arguments had considerable weight, and the motion was negatived by a majority of only twenty-three, being much smaller than those which usually voted for ministers. As governor Johnstone's appeal was rejected, the resolutions of the India house met with no further animadversion from parliament: an order was sent out for recalling lord Pigot, as well as the members of the council.

On the 30th of May, the earl of Chatham made one effort to rescue his country from the miseries of war. This illustrious statesman disregarded the disappointment of his former attempts, and was more strongly confirmed by the event in his reprobation of hostilities destructive to the parties: enfeebled by age, borne down by distemper, and supported by crutches, with a body fit only for the bed of sickness, but a mind qualified to restore the nation from sickness to health if it would follow his prescription, the venerable patriot came forward to propose the salvation of the state by a change of counsels and of conduct. He moved an address to the throne, representing that they were deeply penetrated by the misfortunes which impended over the kingdom from the continuation of an unnatural war. He recommended an immediate cessation of hostilities, and a removal of accumulated grievances, as the only means of regaining the affections of our brethren, and securing to Great Britain the commercial and political advantages of those valuable possessions. In explaining his general object, he unavoidably repeated statements formerly made, and arguments frequently advanced, both by himself and other statesmen. But he exhibited more fully and circumstantially than at any preceding period, the danger to which our discord and situation exposed us from the house of Bourbon. This part of his speech was a forcible, eloquent, and impressive comment on his own text, delivered at a much earlier stage of the contest—
FRANCE AND SPAIN ARE WATCHING THE MATURITY OF YOUR ERRORS. It showed with what penetrating sagacity and enlarged comprehension of mind of which “age had “neither dimmed the perspicacity nor narrowed the “range,” darted into the secret counsels of our rivals,

Motion of
lord Chat-
ham for
terminat-
ing the
war,

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is rejected.

Supplies.

Strictures
on lord
North's
dealings
with con-
tractors.

developed the proofs of their designs, and unfolded the series of their policy. Ministers, he said, as they had blundered from the beginning, are led into a fatal error respecting our inveterate enemies, the French; they imagine nothing is to be dreaded from France, because she has not directly interfered in favour of America. Would they have France incur the expense and hazard of a war, when Britain is doing all for her that she can possibly wish or desire^d? She has been sedulous to give just that degree of countenance and protection, which has hitherto served to keep the civil war alive, so as to baffle your designs, or to waste your strength. The energetic orator described in the truest light, as well as the most glowing colours, the evils that had arisen, were proceeding, and must farther issue, from the ministerial system. Nevertheless his reasoning and eloquence were again unavailing, his pacificatory motions were rejected, and wisdom cried, but she was not regarded.

THE supplies for the current year were very great: they consisted of about forty-five thousand seamen, and about sixty thousand land forces, including all in the British pay at home and abroad. The sums required for the three great departments of annual provision, the navy, army, and ordnance, were granted without a division. The demands of the year rendering a loan necessary, five millions were voted; the new taxes for paying the interest were, a duty upon male servants not employed in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce; on auctioneers, and on goods sold by auction; and additional imposts on glass and stamps. These being all taxes which could not be charged with affecting the necessaries of life, or extending greatly to the poorer classes, were deemed unobjectionable as measures of finance. On inspecting the accounts of expenditure during the preceding year, opposition contended that they were perplexed, obscure, and nearly unintelligible. Beside this intricacy, which they imputed to them generally, there were in various instances great sums stated in the gross amount, without any specification of items. This objection was urged with peculiar severity

^d See parliamentary reports, 3d May, 1777.

against the charges for contracts ; the agreement for supplying the army and fleet in America with rum, afforded an ample field for animadversion : four shillings per gallon had been allowed, when three was the market price ; and the contractor was in one account credited with thirty-five thousand pounds for rum, without any statement of the quantity, quality, or price of the goods delivered : the same person had also the benefit of a very objectionable contract with government for furnishing horses. In discussing these bargains, lord North's dealings with contractors, which afterwards constituted so capital a subject of reprehension, were for the first time scrutinized and censured ; and it was strongly contended, that in the department of his business which respected national grants, the minister was far from being *a frugal steward of the public money*. But the animadversions on this profusion were by no means confined to economical considerations, they also extended to political. Opposition charged the minister not only with waste, but corruption : several contractors had seats in parliament ; national treasure, it was observed, was squandered in iniquitous contracts, and the contractor was, by the money of his constituents, bribed to betray their interests, which he had been chosen to protect. Bad and unwholesome provisions were allowed to be sent by persons receiving a price much beyond the market value of provisions that were really good and wholesome : such deleterious fare spread distemper through the troops, and carried off many more than actual service. The minister endeavoured to defend himself from these charges ; but his arguments, though plausible and dexterously urged, were by no means cogent and convincing.

THE payment of an unexpected demand to the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, for a debt alleged by him to have been due for levy money ever since 1755, was severely censured. The minister contended that the claim was fair, though from the distance of time not expected. The Hessian prince was in justice entitled to the amount, though there had been no late treaty ; and while we were now deriving such benefit from his troops, policy required us to keep on the best terms with him, by satisfying his just demands.

Unexpected demand from the landgrave of Hesse Cassel.

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1777.
Debt on
the civil
list.

AFTER the pecuniary business had been thought to be entirely at an end, and the session was drawing near to a close, a message was delivered from his majesty, informing the house that a debt of 618,000*l.* had been incurred by the civil list. The minister moved, that the requisite sum should be granted for discharging the amount; and that a hundred thousand pounds should be added annually to the eight hundred thousand. This motion was strongly opposed: the incumbrance, it was alleged, was owing entirely to the profusion of ministers, and had been contracted for the sake of carrying on and supporting a system of corruption. The accounts were, as usual with that minister, intentionally intricate, obscure, and general: no less than 294,000*l.* was placed to the account of secret service money; and vast sums were charged for foreign ambassadors and for the board of works, without any particularization. It was inconsistent with the duty of the commons to their constituents, to vote away the national money, without any evidence of value received; the eight hundred thousand pounds was sufficient for answering the various appropriations, and supporting the regal dignity and splendor. The desired addition was peculiarly unseasonable at the present time, when the nation was groaning under their accumulated burdens to promote the ruinous projects of ministry, and to encourage their extravagance and corruption. Ministers argued, that the present debt, and the necessity of an addition to the income of the civil list, arose from the same cause, the diminished value of money; besides, the royal family had increased in number. *The greatest possible economy* (said lord North) *always had been, and always should be employed, while he was at the head of the treasury.* The motions being carried through both houses, the speaker, a few days after, in presenting the bill to the king for assent, used the following words: "In a time, sire, of public distress, full of difficulty and danger, their constituents labouring under burdens almost too heavy to be borne, your faithful commons, postponing all other business, have not only granted to your majesty a large present supply, but also a very great additional revenue, great beyond example, great beyond your majesty's highest expense; but

Address of
the speaker
to the
sovereign.

"all this, sire, they have done in the well grounded confidence, that you will apply wisely what they have granted liberally." On their return to their own house, the commons voted unanimous thanks to the speaker. Some of the ministerial party, however, on reconsidering the subject, were greatly displeased with what he had delivered, as it appeared to them to contain an insinuation not favourable to the character which they claimed of being *economical stewards* for the public. Mr. Rigby, a few days after, declared that the speaker had not expressed the sense of the commons: Mr. Fox immediately moved, that he had spoken the sense of the house. Lord North and the more moderate part of the ministerial adherents, though they wished the motion withdrawn, finding Mr. Fox would not comply, to avoid altercation voted in its favour; and on the 8th of June, parliament was prorogued.

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Occupations of Howe during winter—of Washington.—Plan of the campaign—its late commencement by general Howe—desultory operations in the Jerseys.—General Howe moves from winter quarters—attempts by a stratagem to bring Washington to battle—failing in that expedient, evacuates the Jerseys.—Expedition by sea to Philadelphia.—Battle of Brandywine.—Major Fergusson essays a new species of rifle, invented by himself.—Capture of Philadelphia.—Battle of Germantown.—American fortifications on the river.—Red Bank and Mud Island taken.—American fleet burnt.—Situation of the Americans at White Marsh and Valley Forge favourable to an attack.—General Howe's inaction—he retires early to winter quarters.—Conduct of general and troops at Philadelphia.—Expedition of sir Henry Clinton up the North river.—Capture of Prescott in Rhode Island—Northern army—Burgoyne takes the command.—Carleton offended with the appointment, resigns his employment.—Burgoyne purchases the aid of Indian savages—number of his troops.—Expedition of colonel St. Leger.—The general's manifesto.—Capture of Ticonderago and fort Independence.—Destruction of American galleys.—The army reaches the Hudson.—Cruelties of the Indians.—Defeat at Bennington—Siege of Stanwix—raised.—Battle with general Gates at Stillwater.—Distressed situation of the army—desertion of the Indians.—Burgoyne retreats.—Battle near Saratoga—reduced state of the army—troops surrounded—convention with the Americans at Saratoga.

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THE public attention was now turned to the campaign in America, and great expectations were formed that it would terminate in the complete reduction of the colonies. The general plan was nearly the same as in the preceding year; that the Canadian army should cooperate

with general Howe, and thus the command of New York province divide the northern from the southern colonies.

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A BODY of provincial loyalists was formed under the direction of the commander in chief; they were allowed the same pay as the regulars, and officered by gentlemen who had been obliged to leave their respective habitations for their attachment to the royal cause. Inexperienced, and not inured to military discipline, they were not yet fit for active service, and were therefore so stationed as to allow the veterans to take the field. General Howe himself enjoyed every luxury at New York which he could have found in the metropolis of Britain: his favourite occupation was gaming, a pastime in which many of his young officers became thoroughly initiated. There were routs, balls, and assemblies in great abundance; so that the headquarters bore the appearance of a gay and voluptuous city in the time of peace, rather than a military station for watching and annoying the enemy in war.^e Such were the pursuits of the British commander from December to June. While general Howe thus amused himself and his troops with the diversions and pleasures of New York, Washington was very differently employed. The difficulties which, notwithstanding the forbearance of his antagonist, the American commander had to encounter, were extremely arduous. The provincial forces were hitherto but a militia, both in their discipline and the tenure of their service: the late success at Trenton promoted the disposition of the colonists to resist; but, on the other hand, the severity of the season suspended their military ardour, insomuch that about the middle of February the colonial army did not exceed four thousand men;^f and this small body of raw peasants was moreover sickly. Nevertheless for four months they occupied a position at Morristown, not fifty miles from the brave and numerous veterans of the royal army, where they not only experienced no annoyance from general Howe,^g but harassed and distressed the British posts and foraging detachments. Washington did not fail to profit by the cessation of British effort. The

Occupations of
Howe during
winter.

Conduct of
Washington:

^e Stedman's History of the American war, vol. i. p. 287.

^f Washington's official Letters, vol. ii. p. 31.

^g Ramsay, the American historian, informs us, that his countrymen were astonished at the inaction of the British during so critical a period, vol. ii. p. 2.

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1777.

He devises
means for
rendering
the army
efficient.

Oath of al-
legiance
and fide-
lity.

Howe
opens the
campaign
by detach-
ments.

boundless spirit of individual independence, which so naturally followed the American claims and assertions, was adverse to the operation of authority, and especially to that prompt and implicit submission which is necessary in military bodies. Washington saw that the powers which were allowed in the various gradations of command, were inadequate to their object: hitherto the commander in chief himself was obliged to act according to the specific instructions of the congress. The general represented the disadvantages which accrued to the common cause from authority so fettered; and such was the influence of his known wisdom and patriotism, that he was vested with full and ample powers to collect an army of foot and horse in addition to those which were already voted, to raise artillery and engineers, and to establish their pay. Thus empowered to organize an army, the next care of Washington was to bind the troops to military fidelity as well as political allegiance. To the powerful motives of conceived patriotism and freedom he added the cement of religion, and, with the approbation of congress, proposed an oath of adherence to the provincial cause. Provisions so wise produced the expected success; the colonists soon ceased to be an irregular militia, and became skilful and disciplined soldiers. During the same important interval, twenty thousand stand of arms arrived from the continent of Europe, and before the expiration of the spring the hopes and spirits of the Americans were revived and invigorated to meet the dangers of the approaching campaign. Such were the efforts of Washington during the momentous period which the British general passed in pleasurable quarters.

SUMMER being commenced, Howe proposed to begin the operations of the present campaign according to the same mode in which he terminated the last, and to send out detachments, while with the main army he continued in his present residence. Up the Hudson river, about fifty miles from New York, on the western shore, is a place called Peek's Hill, which served as a port to Courland Manor, and where stores and provisions were received for the American army: to distress the enemy, general Howe thought it advisable to attempt the seizure of this port before the

main army took the field. Accordingly he detached colonel Bird with five hundred men upon this service. On the approach of the British corps, the Americans, after setting fire to the barracks and storehouses, evacuated the fort: by the conflagration, the king's troops were prevented from seizing the expected provision and ammunition, but they effected the chief purpose of their expedition by curtailing the resources of the enemy. Another detachment of two thousand men was sent, under general Tryon and sir Willam Erskine, to Danbury, in the confines of Connecticut, where they destroyed a large quantity of stores: fatigued by their march, they were attacked by the enemy, but repulsed the assailants, though with the loss of two hundred of their own troops, Lord Cornwallis also surprised and defeated a body of colonists near Brunswick. The Americans, on the other hand, destroyed a considerable quantity of our provisions at Sagg harbour in Long Island. General Stevens with two thousand provincials attempted to surprise the forty-second regiment cantoned at Piscataway, amounting to less than a thousand men; but after a furious engagement, the gallant highlanders, under their able commander colonel Stirling, completely routed the enemy. While this desultory warfare was carried on by detachments, the commander in chief remained quiet at New York another month. His alleged reason for beginning the campaign so late was that, *there was no green forage on the ground:*^b there was plenty of CORN AND HAY, which persons conversant in the management of horses affirmed to be preferable food for them when employed in active service, but the general professed a different opinion.

On the 12th of June, the general with thirty thousand men marched towards Courland Manor, where the enemy were posted to the number of eight thousand. The position of Washington appeared to the British commander so strong, that, notwithstanding his great superiority both in numbers and discipline, he deemed it inexpedient to venture an attack; after in vain trying to bring the American general to battle, he, on the 19th of June, pretended to make a precipitate retreat. The Americans left

^b Stedman, vol. i. p. 287.

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Attempts
by a strata-
gem to
bring
Washing-
ton to bat-
tle;

failing in
that expe-
dient, eva-
cuates the
Jerseys.

Expedition
by sea to
Philadel-
phia.

their fastnesses to pursue the enemy; Howe marched his army back, and sent lord Cornwallis to secure the passes, so that the provincials being hemmed in might be compelled to fight. On the 26th, his lordship met the advanced body of the enemy, attacked them with great fury, and soon put them to the route. Washington, finding that he had been deceived by a feint, immediately returned to his hilly station, and occupied the passes before lord Cornwallis could arrive. Not having succeeded in this stratagem, general Howe somewhat hastily concluded that it would be useless to attempt any other expedient for bringing the enemy to battle; he therefore resolved to abandon the Jerseys, and crossed with his army to Staten Island. The general himself, in a plan of operations sent to lord George Germaine, had declared his intention of penetrating to Philadelphia, through Jersey: the minister had approved, and strongly enjoined him in all his movements to have in view cooperation with the northern army. Certain military critics allowed, that if he had continued in the Jerseys, by intercepting Washington's convoys he might have compelled him either to fight, or with his army to perish by famine; that the short and direct road to Philadelphia was through the Jerseys, and that with thirty thousand veterans he could have easily forced his way through eight thousand so lately levied. Notwithstanding these considerations, the weight of which it required little sagacity to perceive, he determined on undertaking an expedition round the coast: nautical gentlemen represented to him, that at this season of the year the winds were very contrary; the admonitions were unavailing, he persisted in his resolution. Leaving a considerable body of troops under general Clinton to guard New York, he embarked the rest of the army on the 5th of July, but by some unaccountable delay did not sail till the 23d. Having arrived at the capes of the Delaware, he learned that the enemy had blocked up the river, he therefore proceeded to the Chesapeak Bay, and sailed up the Elk, but did not come to land till the 24th of August. Thus, from the beginning of November the commander in chief, with thirty thousand of the bravest and best disciplined troops, opposed by less than ten thousand undisciplined recruits,

had not advanced one step nearer the object of his appointment. He was in autumn, by a circuitous and difficult route, proceeding to a city, which in the foregoing winter was ready to yield, if he had advanced by a short and then unguarded road; but Philadelphia was to be captured by the hardships of a winter campaign, and not by luxurious indulgence.

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On landing the army, sir William Howe published a proclamation, offering pardon and protection to all who should surrender themselves to the British army, and assuring the inhabitants that the soldiers should observe strict order and discipline on their march. General Washington, informed that the army was arrived in Pennsylvania, crossed the Delaware with his army on the 11th of September. The British troops advanced to Brandywine, a river which, running from the west, falls into the Delaware below Philadelphia. On the left bank, next to the city, the Americans posted themselves, and erected batteries at Chadsford, where they presumed the royal army would attempt to pass: Under cover of their batteries a body of them also occupied the right bank. General Howe detached lord Cornwallis with two battalions of British grenadiers, as many of light troops, two battalions of Hessian grenadiers, two British brigades, and part of the seventy-first regiment, to cross the river farther up, and thus gain the enemy's rear. At the same time general Knyphausen, with another division, marched to Chadsford, against the provincials who were placed there; in this service the German experienced very important assistance from a corps of riflemen, commanded by major Patrick Fergusson. The dexterity of the provincials as marksmen had been frequently quoted, and held out as an object of terror to the British troops. Fergusson, a man of genius, which was exercised in professional attainments, invented a new species of rifle, that combined unprecedented quickness of repetition with certainty of effect, and security to the soldiers. The invention being not only approved, but highly admired, its author was appointed to form and train a corps for the purpose of practice; but an opportunity did not offer of calling their skill into action, until the period at which we are now arrived. Fergusson with his corps,

Battle of
Brandy-
wine.

Major Fer-
gusson es-
says a new
species of
rifle, in-
vented by
himself.

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1777.

supported by Wemyss's American rangers, was appointed to cover the front of Knyphausen's troops, and scoured the ground so effectually that there was not a shot fired by the Americans to annoy the column in its marchⁱ. So secured, Knyphausen was enabled to advance without interruption, attacked the enemy, obliged them (though protected by their batteries) to cross the river, made good the passage of his own division, and opened the way to the rest of the army. Meanwhile lord Cornwallis crossed behind the enemy's rear; and general Washington, informed of this movement, sent general Sullivan with a considerable force to oppose the British detachment. The American seized the heights which rose from the banks; having his rear and right flank covered by woods, and his left by the river. The British commander began the attack by four o'clock in the afternoon; the provincials, after a very obstinate resistance, were driven into the woods; and posting themselves on another eminence, made a second stand still more vigorous than the first: they were again dislodged, and forced to retire with the loss of a thousand killed and wounded, and four hundred taken prisoners. The main body of the British army had now crossed the river; sir William Howe turned the right of Washington's troops, Knyphausen was

ⁱ The meritorious conduct of Fergusson was acknowledged by the whole army, and publicly attested by order of the commander in chief.

Fergusson, in a private letter of which Dr. Adam Fergusson has transmitted me a copy, mentions a very curious incident, from which it appears that the life of the American general was in imminent danger. While Fergusson lay with a part of his riflemen on a skirt of a wood in front of general Knyphausen's division, the circumstance happened, of which the letter in question gives the following account:---“ We had not lain long when a rebel officer, remarkable by a Hussar dress, passed towards our army, within a hundred yards of my right flank, not perceiving us. He was followed by another dressed in dark green and blue, mounted on a good bay horse, with a remarkable large high-cocked hat. I ordered three good shots to steal near to them and fire at them; but the idea disgusted me; I recalled the order. The Hussar in returning made a circuit, but the other passed within a hundred yards of us; upon which I advanced from the wood towards him. Upon my calling, he stopped; but after looking at me, proceeded. I again drew his attention, and made sign to him to stop, levelling my piece at him; but he slowly continued his way. As I was within that distance at which, in the quickest firing, I could have lodged half a dozen balls in or about him before he was out of my reach, I had only to determine; but it was not pleasant to fire at the back of an unoffending individual, who was acquitting himself very coolly of his duty, so I let him alone. The day after, I had been telling this story to some wounded officers who lay in the same room with me, when one of our surgeons who had been dressing the wounded rebel officers came in and told us, that they had been informing him, that general Washington was all the morning with the light troops, and only attended by a French officer in a Hussar dress, he himself dressed and mounted in every point as above described. I am not sorry that I did not know at the time who it was.”

in front, the Brandywine on the left, and the Delaware at a small distance in the rear. Lord Cornwallis, after his victory, was able to join the general. The only way by which the provincials could escape was between the Delaware and the division under the immediate command of general Howe; it was apprehended, that if the commander in chief had advanced farther round the enemy's flank, he might have enclosed the provincial force: this movement, however, was not attempted, and general Washington drew off his troops during the night to Chester, near Philadelphia. Even the next morning, it was alleged, that the British troops might have intercepted the Americans; but the experiment was not tried. General Howe remained several days at Brandywine after the enemy had retired. Washington employed this very unexpected cessation in collecting his dispersed troops, and supplying from his magazines the stores which had been lost in the battle. On the 20th of September, intelligence being received that general Wayne was concealed, with fifteen hundred men, in the wood on the left wing of the British army; general Howe dispatched major general Grey with a strong body to surprise and dislodge the provincial detachment. Proceeding with great secrecy, the royal troops executed this project so completely, that they killed or took about four hundred, with the loss of only seven soldiers and one officer. On the 22d of September, sir William Howe crossed the Schuylkill with his whole army; on the 26th, he advanced to Germantown; and the following day, with Cornwallis, took possession of Philadelphia without opposition. Being thus masters of the capital of North America, the British commander next turned his attention to establish a communication with the fleet, by removing the obstructions which the Americans had placed in the river, and strengthened it by forts. There were disposed rows of chevaux-de-frize, floating batteries, and gun boats, in the most accessible parts of the river, covered by intrenchments and redoubts on the banks. General Washington, now encamped at Skippach Creek, on the eastern side of the Schuylkill, formed the design of surprising the British camp at Germantown. The 3d of October was the day appointed for executing this project: Washington advan-

Capture of
Philadel-
phia.

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1777.
Battle of
German-
town.

cing with his force divided into five columns, attempted to separate the British army so as to ensure success in the different flanks. The fortieth regiment and colonel Musgrave having the advanced post were first attacked, but the skill and activity of that officer, together with the determined courage of the soldiers, arrested the progress of the enemy, prevented the separation of the right and left flank, and gave the whole army time to form the line. Major general Grey brought up a division with such rapidity and force, that the Americans were obliged to act on the defensive: the engagement became general, and was for some hours very warm; at length, part of the right wing forced the enemy's left to give ground, and fly with great precipitation. The rest of the provincials also retreated, attempted to rally on rising grounds near the scene of action, and pretended to renew the battle; but this was only a feint to secure their retreat. In their flight they were favoured by a fog, which prevented the British troops from an effectual pursuit. Though the king's troops drove the enemy from the field, our loss was very considerable; six hundred were killed and wounded; and among the former, colonels Agnew and Bird, two officers of very high character: the killed, wounded, and taken prisoners of the enemy, amounted to about twelve hundred. On the 10th of October, general Howe, withdrawing his army from Germantown, encamped in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia, whence he sent detachments to cooperate with the fleet in the Delaware. One of the strongest of the American forts was at Billing's Harbour, on the Jersey side of the river, thither the commander in chief detached three regiments under colonel Stirling to attack the place: on his approach the works were abandoned. The English fleet being arrived in the Delaware, preparations were made for attacking the water force of the provincials. The Americans had constructed a very strong fortification on Mud Island, in the Delaware, off the mouth of the Schuylkill; this post commanded the navigation of the river, and unless reduced, could intercept the stores and provisions of the army: opposite to this place was Red Bank, which commanded the fort on the east; while Province Island, possessed by the British, adjoin-

American
fortifica-
tions on the
river.

ed in the west, and the British fleet on the south. Colonel Stirling applied to general Howe for leave to fortify so advantageous a position, the general did not think proper to comply : the Americans did not however neglect to secure so important a means of defence, and with great rapidity raised fortifications. At length discovering the advantage of Red Bank, general Howe sent colonel Donop with three battalions of Hessian grenadiers to attempt the redoubt by assault. The German leader setting out on the 20th of October, arrived the next day at the place of destination. Having marched up in the face of the enemy's fire, not only from the fort, but from floating batteries and galleys on the river and forces in an extensive outwork, they arrived before the redoubt, which they found to be more than eight feet high, with a parapet boarded and fraized, and impregnable without scaling ladders ; for the commander in chief had omitted to furnish them with this implement so necessary in storming a fort. With victory within their reach, if the proper preparations had been made, they were through this negligence obliged to retreat precipitately through the triple fire ; and lost their leader, who was mortally wounded, and died three days after in the hands of the enemy. Five ships of war had attempted to second Donop's efforts, but two of them ran aground : one, the Augusta, was set on fire by the enemy ; and the other, the Merlin, was obliged to be abandoned. Meanwhile preparations were going on for attacking Mud Island from the western shore but the batteries were not opened till the 10th of November ; the part of the fleet destined to cooperate was prevented by contrary winds from advancing till the fifteenth. The provincials quitted the fleet the following night, and two days after Red Bank was also abandoned ; a few of the American galleys escaped, but the greater number were destroyed : a communication was opened between the fleet and the army.

Red Bank
and Mud
Island
taken.

The Ame-
rican fleet
destroyed.

WHILE detachments were performing these services, general Howe, with the main army, continued inactive at Germantown, from the 3d of October to the 4th of December. General Washington having received a reinforcement of four thousand men from the northern army,

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1777.

Situation
of the
Americans
at White
Marsh fa-
vourable to
an attack.

Inaction of
general
Howe.

Retires to
winter
quarters.

Result of
his means
and efforts.

Conduct of
the general
and troops
at Phila-
delphia.

Howe hoped he would venture a battle ; with this view he marched to White Marsh, where the American general was encamped. On the 5th and 6th, he offered battle to the Americans, but they would not come from their lines ; general Howe made no attempt to force the camp, and during the night changed his position. Columns under lord Cornwallis and general Grey dislodged the enemy from two of their outposts : the general still judged it imprudent to venture the safety of his troops by attacking the enemy in their intrenchments. It had been expected that the commander in chief would have attacked the provincials on the rear, where their fortifications were by no means so strong as in the front and flanks, and as the roads in that quarter were very excellent, general Washington himself apprehended that such an attempt would be made, but he was mistaken. Indeed the principles by which the British general directed his military operations, were such as baffled even the sagacity of Washington to discover. The general, without making any attempt on the practicable part of the enemy's camp, retired with his army to Philadelphia. General Howe began the campaign in 1777 with thirty thousand veterans, the enemy with eight thousand recruits : by all his marches, counter marches, detachments, expeditions, and battles, he got fresh winter quarters, without impairing the force of his enemy : the attainment of the object for which he was appointed was no nearer than when he sailed from Halifax. Thus closed a campaign, with few parallels in military history for uniting efficiency of force and multiplicity of operation with futility of result. Such must impartial history transmit to posterity the warfare of general Howe in America.

THE commander found Philadelphia equally productive of pleasurable indulgence as New York. The winter was spent in dissipation of every kind, but particularly in the frenzy of gaming, which was not only permitted by the general, but sanctioned by his own daily practice. A German officer kept a pharo bank, and accumulated a considerable fortune by preying on the British youth, who, through want of employment from the professional inaction of their leader, were driven to fill up their time with

this pernicious pastime, and encouraged by the example which he exhibited. Many were utterly ruined, and obliged to sell their commissions, because, instead of pursuing Washington and compelling him to fight or surrender, general Howe suffered his gallant and active troops to spend the winter in idleness at Philadelphia. The dissipation spread through the army, and tended as usual to produce indolence and want of discipline, which relaxed both bodies and minds. Washington, apprised of the retirement of the British army, quitted his camp, and took a position at Valley Forge, on the north side of the Schuylkill, and determined to winter there in a camp, instead of retiring to the towns of Lancaster, York, and Carlisle, at a greater distance from Philadelphia; by which means he would have left a large fertile district to supply the royalists with provisions. Though his army was destitute of clothing and many other necessaries, and ill provided with tents and other accommodations for rest, yet did raw and undisciplined troops, from enthusiastic attachment to their meritorious general, imitation of his example, and ardent patriotism, bear all those hardships without repining. Among other wants of the Americans, was a great scarcity of intrenching tools; from this cause their lines were much weaker than usual: the approach in front was almost level ground; on the front and right, there was a ditch six feet wide, and three in depth; and a mound of small width, that could be easily broken by cannon. On the rear there was a precipice, impassable except by a defile, which could be easily occupied. On the left was the Schuylkill, which, if it guarded them from approach on that side, also cut off their flight if successfully attacked on the front and right.^k It has been generally agreed by military judges, that if the British commander had made the attempt during any part of the winter, there was a moral certainty of crushing the whole army of the enemy, but from December to May he suffered them to be unmolested.

Situation
of the
Americans
at Valley
Forge.

AT New York sir Henry Clinton received from Europe considerable reinforcements, to undertake an expedi-

^k Stedman, Andrews.

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1777.
Expedition
of sir Hen-
ry Clinton
up the
North
river.

tion up the Hudson river to open a communication with the northern army. A division of his troops having stormed fort Montgomery, he himself attacked fort Clinton. The approach to this post was over a pass of about one hundred yards square, between a lake and a precipice that overhung the river: the defile was covered with felled trees, which prevented the troops from advancing with either quickness or order; and from the fort they were galled with a dreadful fire. Notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties they had to encounter and surmount, the soldiers, both British and foreign, pressed forward with undaunted courage and perseverance, and arrived at the foot of the work. The Americans defended themselves with intrepid courage, but at length were overpowered by the resolute and active valour of the king's forces; and, after discharging a last volley, surrendered at discretion. In no action that occurred during the war, was British valour more conspicuously displayed than in this expedition, and the conquerors treated their prisoners with a humanity equal to their gallantry.

THIS advantage having been achieved by land, commodore Hotham, who commanded the naval equipment, was no less successful by water, and, either under his own immediate direction, or through sir James Wallace, destroyed the greater part of the American shipping on the river. A messenger arriving from the northern army, urged general Clinton to penetrate so far that he might co-operate with those troops; but he deeming the attempt impracticable, returned to New York. While Clinton was employed on the North river, Barton, an American colonel, formed a project of surprising general Prescott at Rhode Island, with a view to exchange him for general Lee. The American had learned that Prescott's headquarters were at the west side of the island, near the shore, and that, trusting for security to a sloop of war which anchored in the bay, he was guarded by only one sentinel, and was about a mile from his troops. Colonel Barton, with some officers and soldiers, landing at night unperceived by the guardship, effected their purpose, and by this means soon procured the restoration of Lee to the service of the provincials.

Capture of
general
Prescot.

WHILE in the south the British arms were obtaining unproductive victories, ultimately disastrous, by consuming our resources and impairing our strength; in the north, they experienced signal defeat, and a complete overthrow.

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1777.
Northern
army.

THE object of the Canadian expedition was to effect a cooperation with the principal force; and the command of the armament was conferred on general Burgoyne. Sir Guy Carleton, from his official situation in Canada, his conduct, and especially his defence of Quebec, might have reasonably expected this appointment; he was an older general, of more military experience, and better acquainted with the country, its inhabitants, and resources. His character commanded greater authority than Burgoyne's had hitherto established: the professional reputation of Burgoyne, indeed, was liable to no objection, but he had not, like Carleton, obtained celebrity. As no military grounds could be alleged for superseding Carleton to make room for Burgoyne, his promotion was imputed to parliamentary influence more than to his official talents. Carleton, disgusted with a preference by no means merited, as soon as he heard of the appointment, resigned his government. The event was such as might be expected from the delegation of important trust, from extrinsic considerations instead of the fitness of the trustee for the service required.

Burgoyne
is invested
with the
command
of the ar-
mament.

Carleton
resigns in
disgust.

THE plan of the expedition through the wilds of America was concerted in London between general Burgoyne and lord George Germaine. It was agreed, that besides regular troops, Indian savages should be employed by the British commander; the alleged reason for calling in such auxiliaries was, that if they were not engaged in our service they would join the provincials; they would be useful in desultory warfare, and the British troops would moderate their atrocity. The force required by Burgoyne was eight thousand regulars, two thousand Canadians, and a thousand Indians. Of these near seven thousand two hundred veterans, including Brunswic mercenaries,¹ a considerable part of the Canadian militia, and the requisite number of Indians were ready when Burgoyne arrived from England.

Burgoyne
purchases
the aid of
Indian sav-
ages.

Number of
his troops

¹ Stedman, p. 320.

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1777.

Expedition
of colonel
St. Leger.Manifesto
of Bur-
goyne.

to commence the campaign. He was besides furnished with chosen officers, among whom were generals Philips, Fraser, Powell, and Hamilton. Having sent colonel St. Leger with a body of light troops and Indians to create a diversion on lake Ontario and the Mohawk river, he himself, on the 16th of June, set out from fort St. John, proceeded up lake Champlain, and landed near Crown Point: here he gave the Indians a war feast, at which he made them a speech, praising and stimulating their courage, but exhorted them to repress their ferocity. At Putnam Creek he judged it expedient to publish a comminatory manifesto, in which, by a profusion of epithets and rhetorical figures, he represented the Americans guilty of the most flagrant enormities; he threatened the severest punishments against those who should still adhere to the cause of rebellious subjects; he should send the Indian forces to overtake the hardened enemies of Britain and their own country; he declared the most assured confidence that he should be able to subjugate all stubborn and refractory revolvers. After having expatiated on the wickedness of their proceedings, and the vengeance which, if they did not repent, they must expect from justice armed with his irresistible powers, he concluded with explaining to them what the penitent might hope from his wise, generous, and forbearing mercy. It required no great sagacity to divine that men, who conceived themselves fighting for their liberties, and for two years had shown a promptness to face any danger on account of so valuable an object, were not to be frightened from their purpose by high sounding words. The impolicy of this declaratory boasting was obvious,^m and, in the opinion of impartial men, stamped the character of its author as deficient in sound wisdom, and that knowledge of human nature, without which neither a general nor a statesman can expect to succeed in arduous undertakings; his denunciation tended only to excite stronger resentment in the colonists, and to inspire more vigorous exertions to defend themselves from the threatened atrocities. Gates, the American general, replied to this production in a very plain but strong manifesto, which formed

^m See Annual Register.

a striking contrast to the pompous phraseology and empty gasconades of Burgoyne's performance.ⁿ The British general advancing on the 2d of July, reached Ticonderago, which, with another fort opposite to it, recently built under the name of Mount Independence, were immediately abandoned by the Americans.^o The general despatched commodore Lutwiche, with the naval armament, in pursuit of the enemy's fleet that was conveying the provisions from the evacuated garrisons to Skenesborough; overtaking them near the place of their destination, he captured some of their galleys, and set fire to the rest.

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Capture of
Ticonderago and
Mount Independence.

Destruction of the
American galleys.

Attack and
defeat of
the American rear.

On the 6th of July, the advanced corps of grenadiers and light infantry, under general Fraser, consisting of near twelve hundred men, came up with the enemy's rear, commanded by colonel Francis, composed of fifteen hundred of their chosen troops. Fraser, notwithstanding his inferiority, attacked the provincials, who received him with the firmest intrepidity. The battle was long doubtful, but the arrival of general Reidesel with the Brunswic troops determined the event. The Americans, conceiving that the whole German force had arrived, retreated with the greatest precipitation. They lost two hundred killed, as many taken prisoners, and about six hundred wounded, of whom the greatest number died in the woods. Of the British, about one hundred and forty, including twenty officers, were killed and wounded. Colonel Hill, with the ninth regiment, was sent to pursue a party of the enemy that had retired to Wood's Creek. Having overtaken them, the British leader perceived that they were much superior in numbers to his corps; he nevertheless engaged, and posted his men so judiciously as to prevent their repeated attempts to surround him by their numbers. After a battle of three hours, the provincials were forced to retreat with great slaughter. Schuyler, the American general, employed a stratagem frequently used afterwards in the course of the war: he wrote a letter to general Sullivan, intended to fall into the hands of Burgoyne; which

ⁿ Speaking of the proffered mercy immediately after the threat of sending Indian savages upon the provincials, he said, "*the tender mercies of the Indian tomahawk we will not solicit.*" See in State papers 1777, both the manifestoes.

^o Stedman and Ramsay.

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The army
reaches
the Hudson
river.

being taken and perused by the British commander, so puzzled and perplexed him as to retard his operations several days, before he could determine whether he was to advance or retreat. At last he resolved to penetrate to Hudson river, while major general Philips should bring the stores from Ticonderago along lake George to fort George, whence there was a wagon road to fort Edward on the Hudson. Military critics affirmed that it would have been much wiser in Burgoyne to have crossed the country from Skenesborough to lake George, embarked, and proceeded a considerable part of the route by water, than to have marched by land through a wild, woody, and swampy country. Their march was frequently interrupted by morasses, impassable without bridges, of which the construction employed a considerable time. Burgoyne alleged, that if he had returned to lake George, the retrograde movement would have damped the ardour of his troops; but the necessary slowness of their progress through those wilds and intricacies, was more likely to repress their animation. It was the 30th of July before they arrived at the river; there they were obliged to wait several days, until their provisions, stores, and other necessaries should be embarked. Burgoyne's expedition had at first struck great consternation into the minds of the Americans; but, on finding his advances much more tardy than they expected, their spirits began to revive, and they made various dispositions for recruiting their strength: reinforcements were sent to general Schuyler, who was posted at Saratoga on the Hudson, about twenty miles north from Albany. They sent Arnold to watch the motions of colonel St. Leger, and to prevent his cooperation with the main army. St. Leger was now advanced to fort Stanwix on the Mohawk river: the general saw it was necessary to cooperate with that officer, and to move rapidly forward; but he had a very large train of artillery: horses and carriages were wanting, provisions also were nearly exhausted. Having learned that the Americans had deposited a great quantity of stores at Bennington, about twenty-four miles east from Hudson river, Burgoyne resolved to attempt the seizure of this magazine; and despatched colonel Baum, a German officer, on that service, with six hundred troops, including

dragoons. It was represented to the general, that the proposed enterprise would require no less than three thousand men; and that Germans, from the slowness of their movement, were by no means so fit for surprising the enemy as the British; that they were, besides, totally unacquainted with the country and the language, so that they could receive no information even from friends of the royal cause. The general, however, persisted in his resolution: the habitual slowness of German movements, added to the badness of the roads and the want of carriages, rendered Baum's advance so tedious, that the enemy were informed of his approach, and prepared for his reception. When he arrived at Bennington, he found the enemy so strong, that, with the small body intrusted to him, it would have been madness to attempt an attack. He accordingly fortified himself, and sent a message to the general, that the scheme would be impracticable without a reinforcement. Colonel Breyman was sent to his assistance, with five hundred Germans, who advanced with their usual tardiness^p. Meanwhile Starke, an American general, who was on his way with a thousand men from New Hampshire and Massachusetts to join the provincial army under Schuyler, hearing of Baum's expedition to Bennington, turned aside to second the efforts of Warner, who commanded the provincials at that place. On the 16th of August, the Americans surrounded Baum, who, though he made a gallant resistance, was overpowered by numbers^q, himself mortally wounded, and his troops put to the route. Elated with their victory, the provincials marched to attack Breyman, who, ignorant of Baum's defeat, was advancing to his assistance. Breyman had just met some fugitives from Baum's detachment, when the Americans, before he had time to order a retreat, fell upon his troops: he made a very valiant defence, but was at last compelled to retire. The loss of the royalists in both battles amounted to six hundred men: this first material check which the king's troops suffered, is imputed to the employment of Germans

Defeat at
Benning-
ton.

^p So foolishly attached were they to forms of discipline, that in marching through *thickets* they stopped ten times in an hour, to dress their ranks. See Stedman, vol. i. p. 332.

^q Stedman, p. 333.

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Siege of
Stanwix,

on a service requiring rapid expedition, and to the smallness of their number.

raised.

COLONEL ST. LEGER invested fort Stanwix, a small fort, defended by seven hundred men. On the 3d of August, being informed that a thousand provincials were marching to its relief, the British leader despatched sir John Johnson, with a party of regulars and a great number of savages, to lie in ambush in the woods : the stratagem succeeded, the provincials were unexpectedly attacked on all sides by the fire of the British troops, and the tomahawks of the Indians. Having made a very brave resistance, after losing half their number, the remainder were enabled to retreat with some degree of order. Meanwhile the besieged, being apprised that the artillery of their assailants was too light to make any impression on the fort, and being well supplied with provisions, rejected every overture to induce them to surrender. A man belonging to the fort, pretending to be a deserter, came to the British camp, and told St. Leger that Arnold was advancing with two thousand men, and ten pieces of cannon, to protect the fort, and that general Burgoyne's army had been cut to pieces. This account made little impression on the colonel, but produced an immediate effect on the savages, of whom a large party instantly left the camp, and the rest threatened to follow if the British commander would not begin to retreat. St. Leger was compelled to abandon his enterprise, and to retreat precipitately, with the loss of his artillery and stores. The failure of this undertaking so soon after the defeat at Bennington, damped the spirits of the royal army, and elated the Americans. The conduct of their savage auxiliaries was extremely prejudicial to the British interest. The admonitions of Burgoyne had little more effect on these murderous tribes, than if lectures on humanity had been addressed to the tigers of Hindostan; and, indeed, the expectations of mildness were as reasonable from habitual butchery as from instinctive ferocity: the barbarities of the Indians, like those of their four-footed brethren, were totally indiscriminate; loyalists and revolvers, if they came into the power of the savages, experienced the same fate. An instance of cruelty which happened about this time was pe-

cularly afflicting: Mr. Jones, an officer in the British service, had paid his addresses to the daughter of an American loyalist, a young lady in the bloom of youthful beauty: she listened to his suit, and consented to become his bride. Anxious for her safety, he offered to reward with a barrel of rum any person who should escort her from her father's house to a place where he was himself to meet her, and that very day receive her hand. Two Indians undertook the task, and had conducted her near the appointed spot, when a dispute arose between them, which should present the lady to her lover. Both were eager for the reward, and the one, to prevent the other from receiving it, murdered the blooming innocent maiden; and the youth, instead of his beloved bride, found a mangled corpse. This and other instances of atrocity inflamed the American people: the cruelties of the Indians, and the cause in which they were engaged, were associated together, and presented in one view to the alarmed inhabitants. They, whose interest it was to draw forth the militia in support of American independence, strongly expressed their execrations of the army which submitted to accept of Indian aid, and they loudly condemned that government which could call such auxiliaries into a civil contest, as were calculated not to subdue, but to exterminate, a people whom they affected to reclaim as subjects. Their cruel mode of warfare, by putting to death, as well the helpless infant and defenceless female, as the resisting armed man, excited an universal spirit of resistance. In conjunction with other circumstances, it impressed on the minds of the inhabitants a general conviction, that a vigorous determined opposition was the only alternative for the preservation of their property, their children, and their wives. Could they have indulged the hope of security and protection while they remained peaceably at their homes, they would have found many excuses for declining to assume the profession of soldiers; but when they contrasted the dangers of a manly resistance with those of a passive inaction, they chose the former as the least of two unavoidable evils. All the feeble aid which the royal army received from their Indian auxiliaries was infinitely overbalanced by the odium it brought on

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Battle with
general
Gates at
Stillwater.Distressed
situation of
Bur-
goyne's ar-
my.

their cause, and by that determined spirit of opposition which the dread of savage cruelties excited.^r In the command of the American army a change took place which proved fatal to the royal interests; general Gates was appointed commander in chief of the northern forces. The British commander having by great industry collected about thirty days provisions and constructed a bridge of boats, on the 14th of September crossed the river, and occupied the heights of Saratoga, about thirty miles from Albany. Thence the army set forward in a southern course; but the march was obstructed by the difficulties of the road which the rains had almost rendered impassable, and retarded by a great train of artillery, which required frequent construction of bridges. On the 19th of September they arrived at Stillwater, where the enemy were encamped; the right wing was commanded by general Burgoyne, and covered by general Fraser, with the grenadiers and light infantry; the left by generals Philips and Reidesel. The enemy attempted to turn the right wing of the king's troops, and attack them in the rear; Fraser with his brigade holding the extreme position on that side, perceived their design, and prevented its execution. Changing their situation, they attacked the British line in front of the right division: the battle began at three o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till after sunset. The right wing only of our army was completely engaged: the twentieth, twenty-first, and sixty-second regiments bore the brunt of the battle with the most intrepid firmness and enterprising courage; they were very hardly pressed, when major general Philips found means to send artillery through a thick wood, which supported and aided their efforts. The twenty-fourth regiment, with the grenadiers and light infantry, also came forward to assist their fellow-soldiers. The Americans fought with no less coolness, valour, and skill: at last, they left the British army in possession of the field: the loss on each side amounted to about six hundred men. Though our troops remained masters of the scene of action, yet the battle of Stillwater was by no means favourable to their

^r Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 38.

ultimate success: they were far advanced in an enemy's country; their numbers were diminishing, without the means of reinforcement; their provisions were sufficient only for a temporary supply; the army of the enemy was daily increasing, and as it grew in force, it became the abler to prevent our troops from successful foraging. The savages showed an inclination to leave the British, from the time the hopes of plunder were disappointed; and it was apprehended they would become enemies, as well as deserters: a few days after, the Indians actually left the British camp. Burgoyne had advanced in conformity to the minister's plan, in expectation of assistance from generals Clinton and Howe. The expected aid had failed; and without it, the project was no longer practicable. Before him was an enemy already strong, and collecting new strength, in a country abounding with difficulties: the only means of saving himself and his troops therefore from destruction appeared to be a retreat. Generals Gates and Arnold, well informed of Burgoyne's embarrassment, projected his interception. For that purpose they sent an expedition under colonel Brown, who, from his activity and knowledge of the country, turned the British rear, arrived at lake George, and surprised and took boats that were conveying provisions to our troops. Burgoyne began his retreat towards Saratoga: his difficulties were accumulating; his army did not exceed five thousand men; their stores were almost exhausted; and a fresh supply being cut off, he was obliged to restrict his soldiers to a reduced allowance. The enemy had augmented their forces, and nearly surrounded him on all sides; it was necessary to dislodge them before it would be possible to return to the lakes. To effect this purpose, on the 7th of October he headed fifteen hundred men himself, accompanied by generals Reidesel, Philips, and Fraser. This body had arrived within half a mile of the enemy's intrenchments, when a furious attack was made by the Americans on the left wing and centre of the royal army. Major Auckland, commanding the grenadiers, sustained their first onset with great resolution; but their numbers soon enabled the enemy to extend their attack along the whole line. The right had not yet been engaged; but the enemy

Desertion
of the In-
dians.

Burgoyne
retreats.

Battle near
Saratoga.

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moving round to prevent a retreat, the light infantry and twenty-fourth regiment instantly formed to defeat their purpose. Meanwhile the left wing, nearly overpowered by numbers, attempted to retire, and was on the point of being overwhelmed, when the corps sent to the assistance of the right division, rapidly changing their movement, endeavoured to secure the left from impending destruction, by which timely aid they at last made good their retreat to the camp. Their right was also compelled to retire, with the loss of many men and several pieces of cannon, and the Americans attempted to force the intrenchments; on that side the engagement was a long time doubtful, but Arnold being wounded, the provincials were repulsed. On the left wing of the camp, the American attack was more successful: they carried, sword in hand, the lines which were defended by colonel Breyman and the German troops, and also took the baggage, stores, and artillery. In this battle, among the slain were colonel Breyman and general Fraser; and a considerable number of officers were killed or wounded on both sides. During the night, the general, aware that in his present position the enemy would in the morning renew the battle with almost certain success, changed his position with his whole army, and occupied a very strong post. Convinced that nothing less than a decisively successful action could extricate him from his difficulties, the next day, from his advantageous ground, he offered the enemy battle. The provincials, however, were projecting measures much safer to themselves, and no less dangerous to their adversaries. They advanced strong bodies of troops beyond Burgoyne's right, with a view to enclose his army. Burgoyne, perceiving this operation, resolved to hasten his retreat to Saratoga; and accordingly, during that night, began his march. He did not reach Saratoga till the 10th; there he found the passes before him secured by the enemy, the shores of the river lined with troops, and the whole navigation entirely in their power. He attempted to retreat to fort George, to make a rapid march along the western bank of the river, and cross by the ford at fort St. Edwards, but received intelligence that both the fort and road were beset by the enemy. The condition of the British army was now most

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Reduced
state of the
army
Troops
surround-
ed.

deplorable : worn down by incessant exertion and obstinate contest, disappointed of expected aid, in their distress deserted by their auxiliaries, compelled to abandon their object without any prospect of a safe retreat, with their numbers reduced from eight thousand to three thousand five hundred, their provision exhausted, surrounded by an army four times their number, and exposed to continual cannonade, fast lessening their before impaired force.* This dismal situation they bore with the constancy of British soldiers ; they eagerly wished for a battle to extricate themselves, or die in the attempt ; but this alternative the enemy would not afford.

On the 13th of October, Burgoyne, seeing every hope of relief vanished, took an exact account of provisions, and found there was subsistence only for five days. He called a council of war, and that he might obtain the sense of the army as generally as possible, with the higher officers were included the captains. The result was, an unanimous determination to open a treaty with general Gates. That very night, at nine o'clock, a messenger was despatched to the enemy's camp, and the next morning was appointed for commencing the negotiation. The British army equally incapable of subsisting in its present situation, or making its way to a better, lay entirely at the mercy of the enemy. The terms proffered in those circumstances were very moderate : besides the articles that related to the maintenance and accommodation of the army on its way to Boston, the principal conditions were, that the troops should be allowed to march out of the camp with all the honours of war, to a fixed place where they were to deposit their arms, and to sail from Boston to Europe, on a promise not to serve again in America during the present war ; the baggage was not to be searched or molested, but private property was to be held sacred ; all persons of whatever country were to be included in the capitulation, and the Canadians to be returned to their own country, subject to the conditions of the convention. On this melancholy occasion, general Gates conducted himself with the greatest humanity and

Conven-
tion with
the Ameri-
cans at
Saratoga.

* Stedman, Andrews, and Ramsay.

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generosity, and not only treated the wounded with the most feeling care and kindness, but was so considerably benevolent, that when the British were laying down their arms, he would suffer none of his soldiers to be present at so mortifying an operation.

SUCH was the conclusion of Burgoyne's expedition, from which the most important advantages had been predicted by ministers and their supporters. So untoward an issue in the usual course of human opinions produced charges of erroneous judgment, ill digested plans, inadequate preparations, and unskilful conduct. The train of artillery, it was said, that Burgoyne carried with him, was superfluous, and retarded movements, the success of which depended on a rapidity that should have given the enemy no time to collect an opposing force. Neither horses nor carriages were provided until the army was ready to take the field ; and this circumstance detaining the forces too long at fort Edward, was ultimately one cause of the disaster at Bennington, the prelude of greater misfortunes. After the failure at Bennington and fort Stanwix, it was urged, that Burgoyne ought to have abandoned the project of penetrating to Albany, and by no means to have crossed the Hudson : he should have secured himself at fort Edward, where, according to the cooperation which he received from the south, he might have either advanced, or retreated to Canada. These censures of Burgoyne, if just, rest entirely on his judgment and skill, and thus ultimately fall upon the discernment of the ministers from whom he received his appointment. There was no charge of neglecting obvious opportunities, remitting personal efforts, relaxing military discipline, or sacrificing professional duty to pleasurable indulgence. If the failure of an expedition proceeded from want of skill in the commander in chief, the obvious question is, why was a person employed, who, neither by any particular act, nor his general character, had discovered sufficient military abilities for conducting so important an undertaking ?

WHILE the political counsels of England produced war with her colonies, and military operations proved either inefficient or destructive, the state of Ireland was by no means tranquil. The octennial act, as a cotempo-

rary historian observes, was no longer an object of exultation than while it was recent.' The great expenses attending elections were severely felt ; the constant residence of the lord lieutenant, which now first became a part of his duty, gave offence to many, who found their power and influence diminished, and a strong opposition was speedily formed. Government proposed a very considerable addition to the military establishment, and, through the influence of the lord lieutenant, a bill to that effect, after violent contests, was passed into a law : but the opposition was powerful ; their arguments making a deep impression on the people, increased the discontents ; and the exertions of the anti-ministerial party soon proved successful in the parliament itself.

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FROM the settlement of Ireland by king William, money bills had originated in the privy council, by whom they were proposed to the commons. Agreeably to this usage, in November 1769, ministers framed a bill for a supply, and having introduced it into the house, their opponents reprobated the proposition as trenching on the rights of the national representatives. The court party quoted precedent, while their adversaries asserted the principles of the constitution : the popular champions prevailed, and the bill was rejected. To demonstrate that they were actuated by a regard for their rights, and not by parsimony, the commons granted an aid much greater than had been required ; instead of a supply for three months which ministers had proposed, they provided a proportionable amount for two years. The liberality of the grant did not, in the opinion of the viceroy, compensate the deviation from the customary mode. Regarding precedent as law, in a speech to the houses he contended that the procedure had violated the just rights of the crown, and protested against the claim of the commons to the origination of money bills ; but finding that the delegates of the people were not to be swayed by his asseverations contrary to their own judgment and will, Townshend prorogued parliament.

Question concerning the origination of money bills.

Prorogation of parliament.

THE prorogation of the national council soon after the commencement of its deliberations, and on account of an

t See Adolphus, vol. i. p. 409.

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Character
of ministe-
rial policy
towards
Ireland.

Long re-
cess.

Violence
against gov-
ernment.

assertion of constitutional right, rapidly and widely augmented dissatisfaction. The popular leaders employed the recess in increasing their strength, concerting plans, and consolidating efforts. Unity of character exhibited internal evidence, sufficient to evince that the same heads and hearts which administered the affairs of Britain, directed the government of Ireland : in the counsels of rulers were to be seen the general causes which, in other operations, we have been contemplating ;—weakness of conduct exemplified in fluctuating and inconsistent measures, and a desultory alternation of precipitate violence and conciliatory attempt. Actuated by resentment, the counsellors of the king deprived of their offices two of the most powerful favourites of the people, lord Shannon and Mr. Ponsonby, and thereby drove them to the anti-ministerial side. During the whole year 1770, the parliament did not meet, and the public dissatisfaction continued to ferment. Early in the following year, government essayed a conciliatory experiment : parliament was assembled, and addressed by the viceroy in a mild and soothing speech. Measures, he said, were adopted and carried into execution for promoting the manufactures and trade of the kingdom ; through the economy of government no new aids would be required, and every thing augured prosperity to Ireland, if harmony in the senate permitted them to devise the best measures for stimulating the industry of the people. This attempt to atone by general professions of good will for specific violence, was not successful ; no mention being made of the prorogation of parliament and its cause, the source of popular discontent still remained. The vehement ardour of the Irish character burst forth in outrage against government and its adherents ; a mob armed with clubs and cutlasses surrounded the parliament house, attempted to impose an oath upon ministerial members, and proceeded to such violence as required military force to repress. In parliament, opposition was powerful and strenuous ; instead of agreeing to the address, they proposed an amendment, reprobating the general system of administration, and desiring the recal of the lord lieutenant. Though this proposition was negatived, yet the anti-ministerial party was formidable by rank and talents,

and supported by the voice of the country ; a supply of money not being wanted, the chief subject of contention was dormant, and the session was short and unimportant. During the recess the discontents continued to glow, while popular writers fanned the flame, and the Irish became more violently incensed against the ministerial party, especially the lord lieutenant. Towards the end of the year, parliament was again assembled. The viceroy opened it with a speech, which was severely reprobated in both houses. In the peers, the duke of Leinster and lord Moira very strongly represented the distressed and discontented state of the country, and imputed it to the viceroy. The same arguments were supported in the house of commons with such force and effect that government carried the address by a majority of only five. On the grand question of a money bill, the popular party proved victorious. The commons framed a proposition of supply, which was adopted by the lords. The lord lieutenant sent the bill to England, whence it was returned with three material alterations by the British council. The commons of Ireland saw that the amendments were in themselves expedient, but indignantly reprobated their origination. A debate ensued, of that animated eloquence which generous breasts pour out on questions concerning their freedom. Operating on the spirit of patriotism, the popular speeches were so impressive, that in favour of ministry there was not even a division ; and thus the vigorous efforts of the votaries of liberty still farther approximated the constitution of Ireland to the constitution of Britain, by ascertaining that the contributions of the people must originate with the commissioners chosen by the people. Ireland had long been the source of donatives to the creatures of administration not only connected with herself but belonging to Britain ; and many pensions on the Irish establishment were bestowed on persons from whom no benefit appeared to the Irish themselves to have accrued to their country. The reason frequently alleged by government for such grants was, that the receivers or their connexions had been beneficial to the whole empire, and consequently to Ireland as well as every other part. The Irish patriots, in a great number of instances, denied

Popular
party is
victorious
in parlia-
ment.

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this allegation, and affirmed that a large portion of the sums paid for Irish pensions was without any adequate advantage to their island, or indeed to Britain. This objection they in a certain degree extended to placemen : various holders of nominal offices with real salaries, receiving their emoluments from Ireland, resided in England ; the popular advocates alleged that persons so circumstanced were mere pensioners under another name. About this time the customs and excise were placed under different boards, in consequence of which there was a great increase of revenue officers. Opposition proposed a resolution for expressing a disapprobation of the change : objecting to this motion, ministers contended that the alteration was extremely beneficial in preventing frauds and depredations. Their adversaries replied, that many of the persons who were nominated officers under these boards and received salaries, actually resided in England, and contended that persons resident in Britain could not prevent contraband trade in Ireland.^b These arguments appearing to a majority not without weight, the resolution was carried, and though inefficient as to any legislative purpose, manifested the disposition of the commons to confine grants within the bounds of utility, without allowing reins to ministerial largesses. While patriotic senators endeavoured to free the country from useless incumbrances, ignorant barbarians carried dissatisfaction to turbulent outrage : a banditti, associating under the name of *hearts of steel*, perpetrated horrid atrocities, and alarmed the whole country during many months, The intervention of the military strength restrained, but did not totally suppress desperadoes.

Lord
Townshend is recalled, and succeeded by lord Harcourt. Effects of the American contest on Ireland.

SUCH was the state of Ireland in October 1772, when lord Townshend was recalled, and lord Harcourt appointed viceroy. This nobleman was individually very popular among the Irish ; but the discontents still prevailed, and when the contest with the colonies came to a crisis, Irish dissatisfaction raged with augmented fury. The disputes between the popular party and administration in Ireland, naturally excited in the sister kingdom a very warm inter-

^b See Irish parliamentary Reports.

est concerning their American fellow-subjects, whom the discontented in Ireland regarded as labouring under a similar oppression with the grievances of which they themselves complained. They considered the British government proposing to render both Ireland and America mere provinces of Britain. These sentiments were eagerly promoted by American agents, who represented Ireland as toiling, that England might wallow in luxury; the labours and manufactures of Ireland, like those of the silk worm, were of little moment to herself, and served only to decorate the idle. Such suggestions exactly coinciding with their own notions, deeply impressed the Irish, who observed the various schemes of American policy, military efforts, and turns of fortune, with an anxiety almost sympathetic: of the people of all ranks, a much greater proportion in Ireland were friendly to the colonies, than in England. Great numbers appeared ripe for even imitating the example of the revolted provinces; but the wisdom of Harcourt avoiding the infatuation of British ministers, employed moderation without timidity, and firmness unmixed with violence. Proceeding in a course directly opposite to that which lord North and his coadjutors followed, he produced totally contrary effects; while they lost America, he saved Ireland. Dissatisfaction indeed continued, but from the time of his government the object of the disaffected was not separation from Britain, but a participation of benefits through a closer connexion. At the period to which the history has reached, the principal subject of complaint among the Irish was the restrictions under which their manufactures and trade laboured, from the illiberal and impolitic system of British monopoly.*

Wise gov-
ernment of
Harcourt.

DURING the first seventeen years of the present reign, Scotland made considerable advances in various departments of industry and improvement. Her progress, however, was such as rather to afford materials of reflection to the philosophical contemplator of general results, than remarkable events for the recording pen of the historian. The acquirements of Scotland doubtless were originally owing to the ability, virtue, and enterprise of her people,

State of
Scotland.

* See Wealth of Nations, *passim*.

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1777.
Effects of
the union.

but favourable incidents and measures tended powerfully to call her energies into effectual action. The prime source of the benefits which poured upon Scotland during the later periods of the eighteenth century, was the union; hence arose her commerce and her manufactures, or rather her access to commerce, and excitement to manufactures. Scotland was not locally more distant from the scenes of valuable trade than England, but she wanted naval force to protect her traffic, and security to her nautical enterprise she derived from the navy of England. When the interests of the poorer country were identified with the interests of the richer, the former became opulent through her characteristic industry and perseverance, while her exertions were beneficial to her partner as well as herself. The able and skilful capitalist, and the able and skilful adventurer, thus acting in concert, promoted reciprocal and mutual benefit. If participation of English trade brought riches to Glasgow and Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee, Montrose and Aberdeen, the demands of these cities, and the appendant towns and districts, enlarged the call for the productive labour of England; and the advantages were interchanged by action and reaction. Time must elapse before, in a new system, beneficial causes produce a correspondent effect: the union very early evinced its benefits to the Scottish nation; and during the reign of George I. and II. Scotland considerably rose in commerce and opulence; political dissensions however impeded her advancement, and much of that ardour and perseverance which have since been exercised in enterprises profitable and honourable to individuals and the community, were then suspended by contest, or wasted in a hopeless cause. Suspected, if not convicted, of adhering to principles and interests hostile to liberty and the English constitution, Scotchmen were regarded with a jealous eye, and avenues which political establishment had opened to profit and honour were obstructed by local prejudice. The ruin of rebel hopes proved eventually advantageous to the great body of Scotchmen, and the impediments to honourable ambition and emolu-

Of the dis-
comfiture
of the
house of
Stuart.

y Insomuch that in the rebellion 1715, its vehement opponents, the jacobites, stipulated with the pretender adherence to the union, if he should prove successful. See Smollett and Cunningham.

ment were removed. The comprehensive policy of the present sovereign regarded neither place of nativity nor political party; the empire increasing in commerce, the means of opulence and aggrandisement, Scotchmen as well as Englishmen came in for their share; wealth flowed on that recently poor country, not only from her own mercantile residents, but from bold, keen, and assiduous adventurers whom she sent to distant regions of the globe. The proceeds of Hindostan manufactures afforded capitals that stimulated the industry of Paisley; the produce of the Ghauts cultivated the Grampians; and the enriching inundations of the Ganges fertilized the banks of the Tay. While such an opening to Scottish adventure enlarged the capital that nurses the useful and lucrative arts, other consequences resulting from the union were especially favourable to Scottish agriculture. This momentous treaty paved the way^z for the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, which formerly enabled Scottish lords to exercise arbitrary power within their own districts, and to be separate tyrants, instead of being an order of men enjoying certain privileges for the good of the state.

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Access of
Scots to
the im-
proved
sources of
English
greatness.

Abolition
of herita-
ble juris-
dictions.

THIS emendation was extremely beneficial to agriculture: formerly the vassals had bestowed a servile attendance on their chieftain, at whose call they had been obliged to repair to his castle, and neglect their own private affairs. In that dependent state they had estimated themselves and each other according to their place in the favour of their liege lord, and their chief occupation had been to court his good graces by being lounging retainers about his mansion. Emancipated from thralldom, they attended to the cultivation of their lands: the generous pride of personal independence succeeded the contemptible vanity which had been gratified by second hand importance. To independence the surest road was industry; the subject for the employment of their industry was their hitherto neglected land: to their inferiors they communicated a portion of that independence which they possessed

^z The destruction of feudal vassallage never could have happened had Scotland retained a separate legislature; because most of the members of that parliament, from vanity, pride, and ambition, would have opposed a measure which reduced them from being petty princes on their own estates, to an equal submission to the laws with their vassals and even poorest tenants.

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1777.

State of
the high-
lands.

and began to enjoy ; they let their farms upon long leases, and dispensed with the most humiliating services ; by the security of their tenures the tenants were stimulated to unusual industry. With this deliverance from feudal servitude, no doubt, the increase of manufactures and commerce very powerfully cooperated to the promotion of agriculture : agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, mutually and reciprocally advanced each other, and conjointly tended to form that middling class, which though, not before existing in Scotland, has in England proved the most efficacious supporters of our laws, liberty, and constitution. As, however, the operation of political causes is generally gradual, the progress of husbandry was not hitherto universal in Scotland ; in the lowland districts it had made such considerable advances as to equal most counties in England. In the highland frontiers, gentlemen were beginning to know the use of fertilizing composts adapted to the nature of the soil and climate, and by means of these to establish a regular rotation of crops ; but opinion and usage surviving institution, the encouragement to farmers was in those districts inadequate. The tenements were too small to admit an accumulation of capital sufficient for the purposes of improvement ; and few leases being granted, the precarious dependence of the tenure prevented every expenditure that was not absolutely necessary for the productiveness of a single year. Some landed proprietors, however, among the valleys of the Grampians exercised a liberal and wise policy in the allotment of their farms, by letting such quantities of land as to admit the full employment of the tenant's skill, and granting leases which stimulated his industry. The beneficial effects which accrued to such judicious landlords influenced others, and the prospect of agricultural improvement in those districts was favourable. A succession of cold seasons some years before had damped the spirit of agricultural improvement ; but these terminated in 1773,^a

^a Here I think it will not be foreign to our purpose to mention a theory which was formed by the peasants of Athol, a district of Perthshire, concerning the severe years, the natural cause of their continuance and termination, as it illustrates the character and notions of our fellow-subjects in an extensive and populous district. Acute and intelligent, with their time not fully occupied by rural business, the highlanders are much addicted to speculation, especially on physical subjects, which make a forcible impression on their senses and obser-

and were followed by fruitful seasons. In more remote and barren parts of the highlands, during the years of scarcity, extreme indigence prevailed, and the evils were dreadfully aggravated by subordinate oppression. Though dissolved by law, the feudal system here continued in fact, without the patriarchal sentiments which had rendered the chieftain and his retainers one large family. The proprietors having assigned their lands in large allotments to *tacksmen*, who, both in situation and conduct, bore a striking resemblance to the *middle-men* who are so oppressive to the Irish peasantry, great emigrations took place. For improving the state of the people, the only effectual means of repressing this spirit, attempts were made to stimulate the inhabitants of the coasts to seek from the ocean those riches, which the coldness of the climate and the barrenness of the soil denied to their industrious efforts. Various projects were formed for promoting the fisheries, but hitherto with very partial success. The influence of the union began to extend even to the remote highlands: gentlemen in the army or other professions became conversant with English sentiments and principles, learned a respect for the rights and happiness of their fellow men, and perceived that by encouraging activity and enterprise among their tenants, they would eventually render them more productive. But this spirit was not yet become general; many of the lower proprietors, as well as of the higher class, whose range of observation, thought, and sentiment was narrowed within the circle of their domains, preferred lordly supremacy over humble dependants, to all the benefits accruing to a landlord from an independent cultivator of his lands on the terms of fair reciprocity between man and man. Light

ration. The cold seasons that had sterilized their fields were naturally the chief topics of their discourse. Desirous of ascertaining the cause, in the want of facts like much deeper philosophers, they had recourse to conjecture. The favourite hypothesis was, that Scotland had revolved within the influence of a frozen star, and would become colder and colder as long as this attraction lasted. In the year 1774, the king's astronomer, Mr. Maskelyne, came to that country, with the view of making observations from one of the highest mountains; Schiehallion was accordingly chosen. The theorists apprehended his object was to melt the frozen star: the season proved at first extremely rainy, which they imputed to the dissolution of the frost, but it afterwards became warm and genial, which they attributed to the complete success of the experiment. Such was their belief at the time, and long after, as I myself know; and I have heard that among the old it continues to this day.

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Ecclesiastical disputes agitate Scotland.

and civilization required to be much more perfectly diffused, before the energies of the highlanders were employed to the degree of advantage of which their combined talents, resolution, and enterprise are susceptible.

THE lower ranks in Scotland have a greater proportion of knowledge, than corresponding classes in many other countries. One great branch of the study even of peasants and mechanics, (strange to say,) is metaphysical divinity. The equalising spirit of presbyterianism, in matters of faith, pays much less regard to human authority, than is bestowed by the votaries of heirarchical establishments; and nothing is more common than to find a day labourer contending with the parson of the parish concerning interpretations of scripture and points of orthodoxy. Connected with this anxious care for the doctrines of the church, is a no less vigilant watchfulness for her government. While England was so much occupied by Wilkes and the colonies, Scotland, without being regardless of these, was chiefly agitated by questions concerning the source of clerical appointments. The law of the land established patronage, either of the crown, public bodies, or individuals: a great body in the church, headed by Robertson, supported the continuance of the law as it stood; a smaller but considerable body in the church, supported by numerous votaries among the people, desired an abolition of the law of patronage; and until that should be effected, such a modification in its execution as would eventually amount to popular election.^b After the reestablishment of the law of patronage in 1712, the clergy found the people extremely averse to the revived mode, which they considered as a remnant of episcopacy, and even of popery; and many of their own body entertained a similar opinion. It was a maxim in presbyterian government, from John Knox downwards, that a presentee, although perfectly well qualified, and unexceptionable in life and doctrine, was nevertheless inadmissible to his clerical office, till the concurrence of the people who were to be under his ministry, had been regularly ascertained. The

^b See Dr. Hill's paper on this subject, as quoted by Mr. Stewart in his Life of Robertson, p. 159, &c. which exhibits a very masterly view of this question, but in more detail than it would suit the purposes of this history to transcribe.

form of expressing this concurrence was by the subscription of a paper termed a *call*, and many of the clergy would refuse the lawful presentee, unless he had in his favour this expression of parochial approbation; thus the mode intended and ordained by the law of the land was transgressed, and the people were gratified by a violation of the statute. During the first years of the present reign this subject was very strongly debated under two views, judicial process in the present circumstances, and the expediency of application for a total repeal of the law. On the first question which came before almost every meeting of the general assembly in some case of appeal, the supporters of *calls* argued from the maxims of presbyterianism, and repeated practice, which they endeavoured to establish as usage and common law; and from the general spirit of liberty. The advocates of patronage argued from the express statute, which every judge is bound to follow, whatever may be his own private or individual maxims or opinions; and contended that practice never can be pleaded in opposition to positive law. A great majority of the people, as might be naturally expected, adhered to those clergy who proposed to allow such weight to popular suffrage, and the clerical opponents of patronage were as a body the chief favourites of the multitude. Among them there were many individuals of respectable talents, and some of transcendent abilities;^c but the great mass of clerical erudition, and the brightest luminaries of literary genius, were on the side of existing law. Against particular exercises, as well as the general principle of patronage, an outcry was raised, which disturbed Scotland much longer than the Middlesex election agitated England. In 1766, the leaders of the popular party proposed an application to the legislature for the abolition of patronage; but after a very able debate, their motion was rejected. From that time no regular attempt was made to change the law, although on every judicial question within its operation it continued to be reprobated by the votaries of popular election.

^c Such as Drs. Erskine and Webster; but, beyond all, Dr. Dick. See Stewart's Life of Robertson.

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Literature
of Scot-
land.
Philoso-
phy.

SCOTLAND, during this period, was peculiarly distinguished for literary effort. In the preceding year^d died David Hume, whose writings must occupy such an important share in a history of the learning of the eighteenth century. As a profound and comprehensive philosopher, Hume had few equals. The powers of his understanding were extraordinary in natural acuteness and strength, and sharpened and invigorated by assiduous exercise; his knowledge was extensive, accurate, and multifarious; his faculty of communication was proportioned to his talents and acquisitions; his language is plain, easy, varying with the subject, frequently elegant, and always strong, without any apparent effort. Such intellectual abilities, however, even though accompanied by integrity and benevolence, were not uniformly directed to the real benefit of mankind. With valuable good that accrued from this sage, there was mixed an alloy of evil. His enmity to the religion of his country was pernicious in proportion to the ingenuity of his sophistry, and the extent of his fame. His *Treatise upon Human Nature*, from false principles, by subtle system of inferences, endeavoured to establish conclusions contradictory to common sense, and rarely has greater genius been exerted in discovering important and beneficial truths, than are here exercised to impress extravagant absurdities: seldom has MIND more powerfully displayed its energies than in trying to disprove its own existence.^e Wild and visionary as the system is, yet there are many observations of the highest value; and the author's mode, together with his example, stimulated readers to a degree of intellectual exercise which strengthened their understandings; the examination of false or erroneous subtlety eventually facilitated the attainment of truth. The publication of these notions was moreover of signal service to the science of pneumatology, in the answers which they called forth. Of these the most distinguished were Beattie's *Essay upon Truth*; which in a popular, animated, and impressive manner, expatiated on the wild theories that Hume supported; and Reid's

^d August 1776.
ise of Human Nature.

^e See Hume's theory of ideas and expressions, *Trea-*

Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense. By rousing the investigating powers of this very profound philosopher, Mr. Hume has been the means of enlarging man's knowledge of his own faculties. The infidelity of Hume, mischievous as it is in itself, has incited the friends of religion to add new muniments to the Christian faith. The Essay on Miracles, and the Natural History of Religion, produced from the ability and learning both of Scotland^f and England^g answers which constitute valuable additions to rational theology; and thus the aberrations of genius corrected by sound reasoning and wisdom, serve to promote the cause of truth. The impression, however, of the Human infidelity was by no means effaced: so renowned an author gave a currency to his opinions which they long retained, and at the period before us they were extremely prevalent among youthful men of letters. The moral system of the philosopher, though far less objectionable than his religion, is not without its defects; probably less in the intention of the author, than the interpretation which his principles may admit. Identifying virtue with utility, and not exactly marking the boundaries of that utility which he denominates virtuous, he has misled inferior^h theorists into very absurd and pernicious conclusions. His scheme implicitly and indiscriminately adopted, tends to render indefinite expediency, private interest, and state policy, the springs of human conduct, instead of conscience and religion; but though this treatise cannot be admitted, at least by the votaries of revealed or even natural theology, as a just and salutary system of morals, the illustrations and incidental remarks contain a portion of wisdom, which, apart from his other works, would be sufficient to evince the profound ability of the author. The politics of Hume are differently estimated according to the previous opinions which their examiners have formed. One observation is obvious, that though he verges to the notions of the Tories concerning government, he inculcates his doctrine on a very different principle. Far from having recourse to divine right, he only carries his moral doctrine of expediency to

^f Dr. Campbell.^g Dr. Hurd.^h See Godwin's Political Justice, *passim*.

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History.

affairs of state; and infers, that in the usual course of conduct, it is safer for the individual and society to acquiesce in partial abuses than to attempt correction by force, and this is the whole extent of Hume's toryism; so that, according to him, compliance or refusal comes to be a mere question of prudence in the existing case.ⁱ

WRITINGS contrary to the observation and experience of mankind are rarely lasting. The metaphysical paradoxes of this extraordinary man are not the foundation of his permanent fame; the work which consecrates Hume to immortality is that monument of his genius, which leaving speculative subtlety, descends to be the vehicle of practical wisdom. His history is probably the first composition of that important species which is to be found in ancient or modern times; not less penetrating and profound than Tacitus and Thucydides, he has chosen a subject that admitted of greater extent and variety than either of these illustrious writers; he has exhibited man as progressively advancing from barbarism and ignorance to civilization and knowledge; and in all these situations, employments, and exertions, which develop his intellectual and moral character; the narrative is interesting and deeply engages the reader; the materials are arranged with the clearness of a mind that surveyed every part and the whole of its subject; the civil, ecclesiastical, political, and literary features of the times are exactly and strongly delineated: throughout this grand production, we perceive the critic of combined taste and science, the philosopher, the politician, the successful investigator and exhibitor of active man. Every friend to christianity must regret that there is, in such an estimable work, a considerable portion of matter which is really inimical to religion, though professedly intended to expose to ridicule, contempt, and censure, some of the superstitions that assumed its name; but the sceptical impressions that render such strictures dangerous, are only temporary; whereas the benefit of the illustrious lessons of wisdom will endure as long as the language that conveys them is known, and as judgment exists to appreciate excellence. With the Corypheus of Scottish litera-

ⁱ Hence Dr. Johnson calls Hume a tory by accident, and not from principle. See Boswell.

ture many others were nearly cotemporary. Having founded his fame in the former reign, Robertson, in the present, raised a splendid superstructure; the historian of Charles V. traced the connexion between ancient and modern man, in the 'old world; then winging his flight to the new, he exhibited the spectacle of savage life in a more just and striking form than is elsewhere to be found. On nations in the cradle of society he bestowed a patient investigation and able deduction in exhibiting the wants and character of their infant state; by unity of design, skilful selection, and masterly execution, he presented an exact, glowing, and interesting picture; he bestowed on his story and characters almost dramatic animation; while the impressive description of the poet did not preclude the truth of the historian, or the reflection of the philosopher. In his inquiries into the bodily constitution of the Americans, the qualities of their minds; their domestic, civil, and political state and institutions; their arts, their religion, their manners, and their customs; he instead of imputing their character and condition to physical nature, with vigorous sense, and sound philosophy, ascribes them to moral and political causes. The success of Hume, and of Robertson stimulated historical adventure in the southern part of the kingdom, and contributed to rouse a writer fitted for transmitting to posterity the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The first volumes excited a curiosity and expectation which it required historical powers of the highest kind to gratify in the subsequent efforts. These illustrious writers chose some specific, though grand portion of story, as the subject of their exhibition of human nature. Fergusson presented man under a more general view; *The Essay on civil Society* traced the species through all the varieties, progression, and declension of the social state; from the first perceptions of sense to the general conclusions of science; the earliest operations of sentiment and reason to the heights of moral and political knowledge; and following barbarity through various stages, conducted it to refinement; until politeness degenerated into enervation, and effeminate vice destroyed what manly virtue had acquired. Smith unfolded the philosophy of political economy, and promulgated the rules and conduct by which

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individuals and nations might arrive at opulence, and the various species of productive industry might be exerted with the greatest success. Blair gave to the public the first volume of sermons which decorated christian morality with all the charms of refined taste and polished composition, and by persuasive eloquence impressed beneficial truth. Home introduced the tragic muse into the Scottish woods, rendered the banks of the Carron as interesting as the shores of the Adriatic, and engaged the heart for sir Malcolm's Matilda as if she had been Priuli's Belvidera. These were among the most distinguished efforts in philosophy, history, and poetry, by which Scotland aspired at literary fame, not unworthy of the partner with whom she was now happily united ; whose liberal munificence, springing from the energy of freedom, affords to every species of beneficial talents the strongest motives for exertion and display.

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Conduct of France and Spain.—Changing sentiments of the French.—Meeting of parliament.—King's speech declares the necessity of continuing the war.—Debates on the address.—Inquiries into the state of the nation.—Lord Chatham takes an active part in parliament.—Renewal of the law for detaining suspected persons.—Mr. Fox's grand plan of inquiry into the state of the nation—allowed under modifications.—News arrives of Burgoyne's fate.—Different conduct of lord North and lord George Germaine.—Operations of ministers during the recess.—Voluntary contributions for levying new regiments.—Propriety of these discussed in parliament.—Mr. Fox's inquiry into the state of the nation.—Mr. Burke's motion respecting the employment of Indians.—Lord North's plan of negotiation with the colonies.—Commissioners appointed.—Hostile intimation from France.—Mr. Fox's proposed inquiry thereon into the state of the navy.—His inquiry into the plan and preparations of the Canada expedition.—Schism in opposition, on the question of American independence.—Discussion on the subject in the house of peers.—Last efforts of lord Chatham.—His illness, death, and character.—Tributes of respect and gratitude paid to his memory by parliament.—Application to parliament in favour of Ireland.—Consideration postponed.—Repeal of king William's act respecting Roman catholics.—Supplies.—Ways and means, and taxes.—Motion for an inquiry respecting expenditure—rejected.—Dignified speech of his majesty at the close of the session.

WHILE Britain was engaged in so momentous a contest, her European neighbours anxiously watched operations and events. France and Spain opened their ports to American ships so early as 1776, and treated the colonists in every respect as an independent people. The

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and Spain,

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laws for prohibiting commerce between Britain and her opponents, ultimately punished only Britain herself: precluded from trade with the parent state, the provincials supplied the deficiency from the markets of our rivals. Not contented with reaping the benefit of the new traffic, the great Bourbon kingdoms abetted the revolvers in their hostilities; their privateers were openly received, and their prizes publicly sold, in the French and Spanish ports. The French furnished the provincials with artillery and all kinds of warlike stores; their engineers and officers carried skill and discipline to the American armies. Two principles prompted our potent neighbours to assist the revolted colonies; the ancient spirit of rivalry determined the court, and the modern sentiments of liberty instigated the people. The literary efforts in the reign of Lewis XIV. had been chiefly employed on works of fancy and taste, or of physical research, but now began to take a different direction, and to investigate theological and political philosophy. It required little penetration to perceive, that both the ecclesiastical and civil establishments of France were extremely defective; that they nourished superstition instead of true religion, and sought the gratification of the court instead of the welfare of the people. Having discovered these imperfections, many now ran into the contrary extreme: Voltaire, D'Alembert, Helvetius, and, above all, Rousseau, gave the tone to fashionable literature: great numbers of the nobility and gentry became deists and republicans; and as the friends of a commonwealth, they were easily induced to favour the revolvers from a monarchical government. Mild, gentle, and indolent, if left to himself, the king would have been little inclined to hostilities; but those who had the greatest influence with him were of a very different character: his queen, Mary Antoniette of Austria, having the enterprising spirit of her mother, was desirous of promoting the glory and power of the crown to which she was affianced, and humbling its rival. The duke de Choiseul, always an enemy to the enterprising rival of France, eagerly promoted the cause of the Americans against England. Sartine, the naval minister, hoped that a war with England, when so much of her strength was employed against her late sub-

jects, would attain his favourite object, the exaltation of the French, and the depression of the British navy. These dispositions were promoted by the American ambassadors; first, partially by Messrs. Silas Dean and Arthur Lee, and afterwards more effectually and completely by the illustrious Franklin. Having reached the highest distinctions as a natural philosopher, this sage eclipsed the glory of his physical theories by his political practice; patriotically devoted to his native country, he was warmly attached to the British interest, while he considered it as compatible with the welfare of America. He had sojourned many years in the metropolis, and from his extraordinary talents was connected with able men of all ranks: he strenuously deprecated the measures of government, and uniformly foretold that the consequences would be fatal. Finding the proceedings of administration daily more hostile to the colonies, and that no petitions would be received or regarded, he withdrew, to assist his native land, preparing for war, which he now deemed unavoidable. He encouraged her efforts, increased her resources, and presided in arranging her plans and forming her government. Having employed his inventive genius and profound wisdom in providing the means of internal security to his country, he next undertook to procure her the most useful foreign assistance. Arrived in Paris, Franklin was courted by all ranks as the philosopher, the politician, the enemy of England, and the friend of liberty. He succeeded in determining the court of France to a war apparently pregnant with discomfiture and distress to Britain, but destined eventually to recoil on the aggressor. The state of France was at this time favourable to financial resources: in 1776, M. Necker being placed at the head of the treasury, by his skill and industry so much reduced the national expenditure, and improved the revenue, that the king saw himself in a condition to encounter England without subjecting his people to new taxes. Great warlike preparations were carried on during the year 1777; but, as the prophetic wisdom of Chatham had foretold, France continued to abstain from actual hostility, until the event of the contest with the colonies should be ascertained. Thoroughly informed of the mighty force which Britain was employing

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in America, from her experience of British valour and conduct she could not reasonably anticipate the ineffectual result of partial success, or the decisive completion of disaster. The hopes of England, she knew from the late campaign, had been extremely sanguine; but they had in no quarter been fulfilled, and in one had entirely been blasted.

THE calamity of Saragota finally decided the counsels of France; the moment of humiliation and debasement was chosen by the court of Versailles to give a fatal blow to the formidable power of her rival. Spain was no less favourable to the cause of the Americans: but harassed and fatigued by her wars with the barbarians of Africa, though as prone to hostilities with England as the elder branch of the Bourbons, she was not equally prepared for immediate commencement.

Meeting of
parlia-
ment.

PARLIAMENT met the 20th of November; at that time intelligence had not been received of the disastrous fate of Burgoyne's expedition, and the progressive advantages of general Howe, with the force under his command, justified the expectation of much more signal and important successes, than those that were actually attained, when the general, instead of pursuing Washington, closed the campaign in the dissipation of Philadelphia. His majesty's speech spoke hope and confidence. Having afforded his servants the means of victory, the king concluded that they would be employed with effect.^k The powers (he said) committed by parliament to the crown had been faithfully exerted; and he trusted, that the conduct and courage of the officers, with the spirit and intrepidity of the soldiers, would be attended with important success. Persuaded that both houses would see the necessity of preparing for such further operations as the contingencies of the war and the obstinacy of the rebels might render expedient, his majesty was for that purpose pursuing the proper measures for keeping the land forces complete to their present establishments; if he should have occasion to increase them, a reliance was placed on the zeal and public spirit of parliament to enable him to make the requisite augmentation. Although repeated

The king's
speech de-
clares the
necessity
of continu-
ing the
war.

^k See State Papers 1777

assurances were received of the pacific disposition of foreign powers, yet, as the armaments in the ports of France and Spain were continued, he judged it advisable to make a considerable addition to our naval force ; it being equally the determined resolution of the king not to disturb the peace of Europe, and to be a faithful guardian of the honour of his crown, and the rights of his people. He informed the commons, that the various services which had been mentioned would unavoidably require large supplies ; and assured them that nothing could relieve his mind from the concern which it felt for the burdens imposed on his subjects, but a conviction that they were absolutely necessary for their honour and safety. His majesty was resolved to pursue the measures in which they were now engaged for the reestablishment of constitutional subordination, and still hoped that the deluded multitude would return to their duty. The restoration of peace, order, and confidence, to his American colonies, he would consider as the greatest happiness of his life, and the chief glory of his reign. The addresses, as usual, echoed the speech ; and their supporters not only justified the measures of government, but expatiated on the *beneficial consequences* which they had produced, and on the flourishing state of public affairs. The opponents of ministers proposed an amendment, requesting his majesty to adopt some measures to accommodate the differences with America ; and recommending a cessation of all hostilities, in order to effectuate so desirable a purpose. We were now, they said, in a much worse situation than when we began the war ; fifty thousand land forces, a hundred ships of war, and thirty millions of increased debt, had not advanced the attainment of our object. Ministers had asserted that we were fighting *for a revenue*, and thus had deluded the country gentlemen and others into an approval of their system : was the accumulation of mortgages the means of meliorating income ?¹ The ministerial assertions concerning the prosperity of the nation were totally unfounded in truth. The loss of our American trade was in itself such a diminution of opulence and strength, as must have severely and visibly affected the greatest and wealthiest

Debates on
the ad-
dress.

¹ See Parliamentary Debates 1777.

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Lord Chat-
ham takes
an active
part in par-
liament

state that ever existed ; but when to this was added the consequent ruin brought on our West India islands, the annihilation of our Mediterranean, African, and Levant commerce, with the failure of our fisheries, arising from the same cause, could our circumstances be justly said to be flourishing ? The depreciation of landed estates, the rise of interest, the fall of stocks, and the multiplicity of bankruptcies, were barometers which plainly indicated the commercial and political fall of British prosperity. Were these the documents from which ministers could evince the truth of their position ? If such already were the consequences of the contest with our colonies only, what were we to expect when the house of Bourbon contributed its combined strength and resources ? Let parliament reflect on the situation to which they had brought the country by their support of ministerial counsels, and change a system so often demonstrated to be pernicious, but of which the mischiefs had far exceeded the predictions of warning wisdom. The earl of Chatham took a very active share in adducing and supporting these arguments ; and whereas ministers insisted that both the honour and interest of Great Britain required perseverance, he denied that it was truly honourable to persist in a hopeless undertaking, or advantageous to seek an impracticable object by destructive means. Such was the reasoning by which the celebrated orators and statesmen^m of opposition simplified and exhibited the state of the country and the conduct of administration, in order to show that, to recover our former greatness, it was necessary to abandon those measures by which our distresses had been incurred. They were, however, unavailing ; the proposed amendments were rejected, and the addresses carried by considerable majorities, though not so great as those which had voted with the minister at the commencement of the war. In the house of commons especially, the country gentlemen began to perceive, that the promises of American revenue to relieve them from their burdens, were so far from being realised, that the imposts were rapidly accumulating : they indeed did not vote against ministry, but were very cold in their support.

^m See speeches of Fox, Burke, and Chatham, with others in the debate,

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1777:

Renewal of
the law for
detaining
suspected
persons

ONE of the first acts of the session was a renewal of the law for detaining suspected persons. In discussing this proposition, the opponents of administration contended, that as its principle was unconstitutional, so its operation had been found to be useless: in fact, no occasion had occurred for carrying it into effect. Ministers argued, that its cause, the American rebellion, still continued, and thereby rendered its renewal necessary; it had been originally intended less to punish, than to prevent treason. The circumstance from which opposition endeavoured to demonstrate its uselessness, really arose from its preventive efficacy: disaffected men were by the fears of this law restrained from acting according to their dispositions, by abetting and cherishing revolt. The law was renewed. From the debate with which the session commenced to the Christmas recess, the great object of opposition was inquiry into the state of the nation. After several incidental and prelusive debates, the conduct of this momentous question was undertaken by the comprehensive genius of Mr. Fox. The penetrating and expansive understanding of this extraordinary man conceived and proposed a plan adequate to the magnitude of the object. "It was useless (he said) to waste time in vain declamation; let us establish general facts by an accurate induction of particulars. The great question concerning the propriety of perseverance in the American war, depends on the experience which we already possess, and a calculation of the means which remain to the nation for the attainment of this favourite object." The principal premises of his projected investigation he reduced to the following general heads: 1st, the expenses of the war, and the resources which the nation possessed to raise the supplies necessary for its continuance; 2dly, the loss of men from that war; 3dly, the situation of trade, both with respect to America and the foreign markets; 4thly, the present condition of the war, the hopes that might be rightly entertained from its continuance, the conduct and measures of the present administration, the means of obtaining a lasting peace, and our present state with regard to foreign powers; 5thly, what progress the commissioners had made, in consequence of the powers with which they were intrusted for the pur-

Mr. Fox
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pose of bringing about a peace between Great Britain and her colonies. These inquiries would include a great variety of questions, and would demand the production of a multiplicity of documents. If, he said, on fully exploring our situation, it should appear dangerous and disgraceful, and to have arisen from the misconduct of ministers, a new set must be necessarily appointed; but if, on the other hand, the state of the country be flourishing and glorious, as its advantages and splendor are confessedly owing to the present ministers, they must be supported. By inquiry only can it be ascertained what our condition is, and how far their conduct has been wise or foolish. The more complete the communication of documents may be, the more thoroughly can we estimate the merit or demerit of ministers. If they are conscious that their measures are right, they will court discussion; if they are aware they are wrong, they will either oppose a scrutiny, or endeavour to defeat its purpose by garbled or imperfect information. Lord North easily perceived, that such strong reasoning could not be directly controverted; and that, on the other hand, the admission of the proposition in its full extent would be neither expedient nor agreeable to administration; he therefore endeavoured to please both parties. He professed to support Mr. Fox's motion. It would, he said, afford ministers an opportunity of justifying their conduct, and proving the nation to be in a flourishing state: he wished, however, to reserve to himself the right of withholding such papers from the house, as it might be inconvenient, dangerous, or prejudicial to government, to expose. Mr. Fox readily perceived the object and latitude of this discretionary exception, and soon put the real intentions of ministry to the test. A multiplicity of papers being at his instance produced, he proposed that they should be referred to a committee of the whole house, which should sit two months after that day, on the 2d. of February, to afford time for the production of the required papers, lists, and accounts. These propositions being carried, he moved for an address to his majesty, for copies of all the papers relative to steps taken in conformity to the prohibitory act of 1776, for granting peace to those who should submit to the king's authority. The minister saw

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that the object of this motion was to prove that the prohibitory act had estranged the colonies, as opposition had predicted, instead of conciliating them, as ministers had prophesied. He therefore vehemently opposed the motion, as tending to produce discoveries which would be unwise and prejudicial to the country. Without proving this assertion, he repeated it with such a variety of illustration, as by many members was received for proof; and the papers were withheld. In the house of peers, however, very much to the surprise of both parties in the commons, on a similar motion, the required papers were ordered, without a debate. From this grant of the ministerial lords, of what was refused by their colleagues in the other house, opposition conceived the grounds of their opinions strengthened, respecting the want of concert among the members of administration.

BUT the arrival of intelligence from America soon presented the state of the nation in a more dismal light, than the sagacity of a Fox, a Burke, or a Chatham, had anticipated. On the 3d of December, despatches were received at the secretary of state's office, announcing the fate of the northern army. Uncertain rumours being spread in the course of the morning, as soon as parliament met the secretary was questioned respecting the intelligence. Rising up slowly from his seat, he in a low voice and sorrowful accent, acknowledged that general Burgoyne and his army were prisoners of war. For a considerable time after the fatal tidings were delivered, a dead silence overspread the house; shame, consternation, and dismay, from the declared issue of their boasted ornaments, did not more closely enchain the tongues of the promoters of the war, than astonishment and grief at so signal a calamity overwhelmed the thoughts, feelings, and utterance of their opponents. The stillness, however, of amazement and grief at length gave way to the loudness of lament and the fury of indignation. All the charges and censures that ever had been or could be adduced, were repeated and accumulated against the authors of a war so unjust in principle, and so inexpedient in policy; against conductors so deficient in wisdom of plan, vigour of execution, and skilful and effectual application of the multifarious re-

News arrives of the disaster at Saratoga.

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sources allowed them by the misplaced confidence of parliament, and the credulity of the country. As ministers, it was said, they displayed gross ignorance, despicable incapacity, and infatuated obstinacy, in all and every part of their measures. After having, by a long and uniform series of mismanagement and folly, brought their country from exaltation to distress, they crowned the mischief of their system by a most dreadful disaster. This ruinous expedition flowed entirely from the same source as the whole of their pernicious system; confidence in false reports and gross exaggeration, which could not once, much less repeatedly and even constantly, have imposed upon understandings in the smallest degree discriminating, unless they had been blinded by their wishes. The secretary had projected the northern expedition in his closet. Sitting in Westminster, he ventured to direct, not only the general operations, but the particular movements of an army traversing the deserts of America: there were rumours that the inhabitants of Albany would cooperate with the British army, and ministers had formed their Canadian plan, according to their usual practice, on implicit faith in idle reports. A junction, it had been said, was designed between the armies of generals Burgoyne and Howe. To effect this purpose by sea would have been easy, but by land would have occupied a whole campaign: before the armies could have joined, the season for united exertions must have been past. General Howe, instead of cooperating with Burgoyne, was ordered to betake himself to the south; and Burgoyne and his brave soldiers being commanded to advance into the wilds of the enemy's country, had fallen a sacrifice to the ill advised directions of ministers.

Different
conduct of
lords
North and
Germaine.

LORD NORTH, in the mildness of his disposition, acknowledged miscarriage, but deprecated blame; his intention had been to promote the honour and interest of his country; he had counselled, and acted according to the best of his judgment; he had always been the adviser and promoter of peace and would gladly relinquish his office, if his resignation would facilitate its honourable attainment. He had been forced into a situation of the highest responsibility by the circumstances of the times

and obedience to his sovereign, and had not accepted the appointment from choice. He had found American affairs in a state which he by no means approved ; from the dispositions of the Americans, he saw the difficulty, danger, and unproductiveness of taxation, and had therefore proposed and carried a clause of repeal ; in his subsequent measures, he had been driven by the force of circumstances, instead of being led by his own deliberate approbation. This gentle reply, which was better calculated to disarm resentment than to confute argument, diminished the asperity of invective, without weakening the efforts of reasoning. Whatever his motives or wishes might be (said his censurers), the measures actually proposed by him, and adopted through his ministerial influence with such obstinacy of perseverance, notwithstanding the repeated and uniform warnings that he had received, had in four years brought enormous debt, flagrant disgrace, and direful calamity on his country. If, therefore, his intentions were so pure and faultless as he represented he incurred a charge of incapacity, which ought immediately to deprive him of his situation.

LORD GEORGE GERMAINE was not so explicit as his colleague ; he merely requested the house should suspend its judgment, until the facts were properly examined. He also insinuated, that the conduct of the minister and general should undergo a scrutiny, before a just and accurate opinion could be formed. This observation being construed to imply censure against the absent general, revived the flame of rage which the mildness of lord North had cooled ; and produced acrimonious violence, with personal retrospections, totally irrelevant to any business before the house.

EARL CHATHAM frequently attended in parliament this session, which was destined to be his last : he moved on the 5th of December, that copies of all the orders issued to Burgoyne relative to the northern expedition, should be laid before the house. After pouring out his eloquence against the pernicious system, blunders, and miscarriages of ministry, the spirit of delusion, he said, had gone forth ; the ministers had imposed on the people,

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parliament had been induced to sanction the imposition, and false lights had been held out to the country gentlemen: by a promised diminution of tax, they had been seduced to the support of a most destructive war; but the visionary phantom, which had been thus conjured up for the basest deception, was now about to vanish, and the conduct of ministers ought to be probed. His lordship's motion, eloquently and forcible as it was supported, was carried in the negative. On the 10th of December, Mr. Wilkes proposed a repeal of the obnoxious laws. Opposition gave him little support; it was now, they conceived, too late to expect conciliation from such a tardy concession, and measures must be adopted more seasonable in the existing circumstances. On the 11th of December, an adjournment to the 20th of January was moved and carried, contrary to the strenuous remonstrances of opposition, who in a situation of such emergency, were extremely inimical to so early and long a recess; and ministers employed this interval in forming and arranging measures adapted to the present reverse of fortune.

THE loss of the northern army appeared to have entirely counteracted the schemes of administration for subjugating America. The advantages obtained under general Howe, were far from being decisive; he had taken towns, but had not conquered the enemy's troops. No additional forces could be expected from the German princes, and it would be with difficulty that their corps in our service would be recruited to their full complement. The bad success which had already attended our efforts, was very inimical to the increase, or even separation, of our armies from our own country. These actual difficulties were enhanced by expected dangers; the conduct of the house of Bourbon was so openly, and, indeed, so glaringly adverse to Britain, that war appeared probable, if not certain. In such circumstances, many, not inimical to ministers, conceived, that perseverance in our attempts would be infatuated obstinacy, instead of magnanimous firmness, and expected that they would desist from such a hopeless enterprise: but these expectations were totally disappointed; it was resolved to persist in the system of compulsion. Lord North was desirous of offering some terms of conci-

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ters during
the recess.

lition; but he agreed with his colleagues, that if these did not produce the intended effect, it was incumbent on Britain to persist in her plans of force. And if this determination be not altogether consonant to political wisdom, it was perfectly conformable to the general series of ministerial conduct. From a review of the measures and proceedings for the last four years, it is evident that they had not considered the great subject of their thoughts and policy so comprehensively and acutely, as to examine, compare, and estimate the value of the object, with the trouble, expense, and danger of the means, but narrowed their thoughts to the probability of success. Continuing this imperfect and partial mode of appreciation, they still entertained hopes that they might ultimately prevail. The force which they had furnished was, they alleged, sufficient for the object, if it had been properly employed. Much more effectual advances might have been made by an army so powerful, and so well supplied, against such an inferior enemy. By wise and judicious efforts, the British army, if properly recruited and repaired, must be victorious; but, although the necessity of raising a considerable body of new troops was, on this ground of policy, sufficiently evident, the means were not so obvious. The late misfortune, and the little apparent room for hope, which now remained, of bettering our condition by force, allowed no encouragement for an application to parliament; the ministers, therefore, had recourse to the persons and classes who had shown the greatest eagerness in the prosecution of the American war, and professed to afford them an opportunity of testifying their peculiar attachment and loyalty to the crown. They proposed, that individuals and corporations should raise regiments, and being allowed the bounty money given by government in the time of peace, should defray the recruiting expenses beyond that sum; in return for which, the contracting parties should have the appointment of the officers, who, it was not doubted, would willingly undertake to levy a number proportioned to their respective commissions; such a quota of men would make up the requisite supply. In the former war, Mr. Pitt had experienced many important advantages from Scotch highlanders. Actuated by a mistaken

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zeal, these courageous, hardy, and enterprising mountaineers had twice struck terror into the bravest British veterans, and the most populous parts of England; but had shown, in Flanders, Germany, and America, that, when properly instructed and guided, they could fight as well for their king and country, as, when misinformed and misled, they had fought against our constitutional law and government. Part of the present plan was, to bring great bodies of highlanders into his majesty's service. Of a migratory and adventurous disposition, and, in those days of unimproved agriculture, possessing scanty means of livelihood, those men were much more inclined to the military profession, than people in richer countries, and of stationary habits. Besides, there had been a succession of cold and withering seasons, which had greatly diminished their usual resources from pasturage. Distress combined with courage and the spirit of adventure, to dispose them to be soldiers. In addition to these motives, another principle was addressed; the attachment of the peasantry to the chieftains, so prevalent in all feudal countries; and which, in the highlands, combined patriarchal with seignorial relations. The noblemen, and other chiefs of the greatest power and influence, undertook to raise regiments. From the north, the Mackenzies brought two thousand, and the Gordons one; from the northwest and the isles, the Macdonalds brought one thousand; from the west, the duke of Argyle two thousand; from the southwest, the duke of Hamilton one thousand; and from the southern frontiers of the highlands, the duke of Athol one thousand. To this powerful support from the landed proprietors, commercial wealth added its efforts: the city of Edinburgh raised a regiment equally numerous and well appointed as the others: nor was Glasgow, though she had suffered very much from the American contest, behind her eastern neighbour. In England, Manchester and Liverpool preceded other mercantile towns, in performing the same service. But, in order to render the efforts of moneyed opulence generally employed and extensively beneficial, it was ardently wished, though not so sanguinely hoped, that London would take the lead; the city and corporation were not, indeed, so violently inimical to the

court, as they had been some years before ; of the popular leaders, some were dead, and others had, from various causes, lost much of their former influence. The general sentiment was not so completely changed, as to give ministers a majority in the municipal councils of the metropolis : sir James Esdaile, the lord mayor, was friendly to administration ; but his authority was not sufficiently great to determine the livery ; and his motion for corporate efforts to recruit his majesty's forces, was negatived. A private association, however, was formed, to collect the contributions of individuals, and considerable sums were raised. The same mode was adopted at Bristol, with proportionate effect. In various parts of England similar attempts were made, but with trifling success : the great source of contribution, confidence in the ministers that were to dispose of the product, appeared to be most frequently wanting. The troops levied in this manner amounted to about fifteen thousand men, ten thousand of whom were raised in Scotland.

WHEN parliament assembled after the recess, the contributions by individuals or bodies, for repairing the exhausted army, were represented by opposition as illegal and unconstitutional ; illegal, because men and money had been raised without consent of parliament ; unconstitutional, because such levies were indefinite as to number, and might be employed to deprive the country of its liberties. The law lords, and commoners connected with administration, argued, that the king, by his prerogative, was empowered to levy men, and to raise an army. When the new levies were reported to parliament, it was the duty of that body, if they approved of the measure, to provide for their subsistence : if otherwise, to refuse a supply, which in effect, would disband the troops. The money raised was offered by individuals and bodies, who had a right to present their own money to the king as well as to any other person. Voluntary contributions of either men or money, or both, had been frequently offered in times of emergency ; as for instance, in the rebellion of 1745, and the beginning of the seven years war, which were highly approved by men most distinguished for attachment to the constitution ; in the former of these eras, by the lord

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chancellor Hardwicke ; and the latter, by Mr. Secretary Pitt. That the offers of individuals, in times of national difficulty, to contribute their utmost efforts, either by men or money, to the extrication of their country, were not laudable, and ought not to be received, opposition leaders were too able to affirm : without discussing the general principle, they endeavoured to prove, that the cases were totally different ; and that the only means of relief from our present calamities was, to abandon coercive measures, and withdraw our troops from America. But, if the augmentation was at all necessary, it should have been effected by filling up the old regiments to their full complements ; which would be both more conducive to military discipline, by attaching new recruits to veterans ; and more economical, by saving immediately the pay, and ultimately the half pay, of the officers. The mode now adopted, raised many gentlemen of no experience, to appointments fit only for veteran officers. The distribution of military trust bore much more the appearance of ministerial jobs to increase their patronage, than the policy of statesmen to strengthen the national force. These objections being canvassed by the supporters of administration, the question was proposed for granting the sums that were required for the new troops, and carried in the affirmative.

THE time appointed for inquiring into the state of the nation now drawing near, various motions were made for the presentment of papers ; especially the instructions given to the generals in America ; the correspondence that had passed between the commanders respectively ; and also for accounts of the troops, artillery, and stores, which were in the various parts of America in the beginning of 1774, or sent thither since that time. The papers required, were either not produced at all, or so imperfectly, as to withhold in a great degree the desired information. From the materials however, incomplete as they were, Mr. Fox attempted to establish one great proposition ; not only the expediency, but the absolute necessity, of bringing the American war to the speediest possible conclusion ; and of restoring harmony, upon a broad and equitable foundation, between the mother country and her colonies. He comprehended and exhibited in one

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view, the whole series of ministerial counsels; the detail of means, and the particulars and amount of the result; ministers, he argued, and the majority in parliament, had preferred coercive to conciliatory measures; in consequence of that preference, Britain had gone to war with America; that war had lasted a certain number of years, had been prosecuted with a specified force by sea and land, attended with a stated expense of money and lives, and our utmost efforts in three years had not produced any material advantage. The army of Britain, in the course of hostilities, had been much more numerous and strong, and the army of the enemy less numerous and weaker, than they were at present: it was nearly impossible to place our troops in America on the same relative footing to the forces of the colonies, with these which had already failed; and, after the repeated and continued failure of a very great force, we could not, consistently with probability and common sense, succeed with a much smaller. He enumerated the details of expense incurred by the war, stated the resources of the country, and denied that the nation could supportⁿ the continuance, much less the increase of expense, which perseverance in coercion would demand: repeating, in detail, the various political measures of government, from the Boston port bill downwards, he contended, that they had so much alienated the minds of the Americans, that a much greater army would have been necessary to reduce them to submission, than Britain had sent, or could send. Ministers had not assisted force by policy: negotiations, it is true, had been tried, but the obnoxious laws, rejection of petitions, and the very overtures themselves, had rendered them unavailing. From this chain of positions he inferred, that it would be impossible to reduce America by arms; and our situation respecting France, made it necessary to employ a strong force for the security of our own country, and of

and infer-
ence,

ⁿ An impartial reader may probably disapprove of Mr. Fox's circumscription of the possible resources of his country: as, in the first place, erroneous in point of fact, since they were soon found equal to much greater expenditure; and secondly, not proper, to be publicly declared. Disagreement of opinion, however, concerning the general extent, is perfectly compatible with the most exact coincidents of judgment, concerning the impolicy of employing any part of them in an attempt to subjugate America, after the disaster at Saratoga.

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our garrisons in Europe. He moved, therefore, that the committee should address his majesty, that no part of the old established national forces in these kingdoms, or in the garrisons of Gibraltar or Minorca, should be sent to America. To the great surprise of the public, no answer was made either to the speech or motion ; the question being called for without a debate, Mr. Fox's proposition was rejected by a majority of two hundred and fifty-nine to one hundred and sixty-five.

FROM the silence of ministers, it was conceived that a new scheme was in agitation respecting America, which determined them to abstain from that subject, until they should be ready to lay their plans before parliament. While the public was anxiously expecting the result of ministerial deliberations, Mr. Fox proposed, and explained to the committee on the state of the nation, twelve motions, framed agreeably to the principles and outlines which he had already stated and drawn. Their object was, to particularise the force employed, the numbers lost, the sums expended, and progress made ; and to establish, as a general position, that, in every view of this improvident and destructive war, they should bear constantly in mind, that, besides our having suffered such disgraces in its progress as this country never before experienced, all those thousands of lives, and millions of money, had not only been thrown away to no manner of purpose, but that, on the contrary, the vast expense of blood and treasure had rendered conciliation much more difficult, and consequently our situation as a nation infinitely worse, than if the sword had never been drawn. Ministers objected to the several motions, as tending to disclose our situation to the enemy, and being in other respects hurtful to the country. Resolutions of a similar import were moved in the house of peers by the duke of Richmond, and experienced the same fate.

Mr.
Burke's
motion on
the em-
ployment
of Indians.

IN reviewing the conduct of the war, Mr. Burke moved an inquiry into the employment of the Indians. Detailing the horrid massacres of these savages with all his animation and force of description, he contended, that the infliction of individual pain, more than the political annoyance of their enemies, was their object ; and thence argued, that their mode of hostility was not conducive to the purposes

of civilised nations engaged in a war ; these not being torment, but reduction and pacification. Nothing but necessity could excuse the employment of such savage warriors ; the reasons that were in force in the war between the French and English, did not now exist. The Indian tribes had formerly been powerful states, relatively to the European settlers ; it was then necessary to cultivate amity with them, in order to prevent their murderous incursions ; but now their numbers were reduced, and there remained no motive or reason for seeking their alliance. To the purposes of conquest or coercion, they were totally inefficacious ; their employers might, through them, obtain partial butchery, but could derive no important advantage : on the appearance of danger, they would immediately desert every other commander, as they had abandoned Burgoyne. The employment of the savages was also farther objectionable as a measure of economy, one Indian soldier cost as much as five of the best regular troops ; even, therefore, were their mode of warfare unexceptionable in other respects, the service did not nearly repay the expense. It was said by ministers, that if we had not employed the Indians, the Americans would have employed them against us : but there was no proof that they ever entertained any such intention ; and if they had, the cruelty would not have been so destructive against regular embodied soldiers, who could so easily repel those undisciplined murderers, as against scattered and defenceless women and children. The attempt also to incite an insurrection of the negro slaves in the southern colonies, he reprobated, as equally barbarous and impolitic, as farther irritating the Americans by the attempt, and being in the execution ineffectual ; and the motion, after a long debate, was negatived.

LORD NORTH had frequently afforded ground for an opinion that he was by no means so eager for coercive measures, as some of his colleagues. He had made several attempts to produce conciliatory plans, and had shown himself not indisposed to concession, until he was recalled by his coadjutors to the coercive tone of the court.^o Although, in compliance with the more obstinate and imperious mem-

Lord North's plan of negotiation with the colonies.

^o See this History, vol. i. chap. xiv. & passim.

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bers of the cabinet, he expressed a determination to persevere in the attempt, agreeably to his own disposition as well as to the policy which his judgment approved, he once more made a conciliatory essay, and on the 17th of February 1778 he proposed to the house of commons a plan for that purpose. He repeated his uniform conviction of the inefficiency of American taxation as a measure of finance; and thereby virtually, though not expressly, acknowledged the false reasoning of those colleagues or supporters who proposed by war with America to increase our revenue. He had wished to keep the discussion of taxation as a right as much as possible out of parliament, being convinced that its exercise would neither be productive nor expedient. Circumstances and events had forced the subject upon the legislature, and the uncomplying conduct of the colonists had rendered war unavoidable. The success of the hostilities had been totally different from what the country had reason to expect, from the great, well appointed, and amply provided force, which had been furnished by government. In the whole course of the last campaign, sir William Howe, in the number and goodness of his troops, and all manner of supplies, had been hitherto much superior to the army of Washington. General Burgoyne, until the disaster of Bennington, was nearly twice as strong as Gates. The issue of this expedition was totally different from the expectations that were reasonably formed; but to events, and not to hopes, their plans must be adapted. He moved to bring in two bills, one to declare the intentions of parliament concerning the exercise of the right of taxing America; and another, to enable his majesty to appoint commissioners for quieting the disorders now subsisting in the colonies. Five commissioners were to be appointed, any three of whom were empowered to treat with the congress, or any other assembly of men, and even with individuals in America, concerning grievances existing in the government of the colonies, or in the laws of Great Britain that extended to them; and contributions, or any other regulations which might be for the common good of both countries; with a proviso, however, that such agreements should not be binding until ratified by parliament. The commissioners were to be invested with abso-

lute power for proclaiming a cessation of hostilities by sea and land, opening an intercourse with the mother country, suspending the operation of all acts of parliament relating to the North American colonies passed since the 10th of February 1763, and granting pardons to every description of persons.

In viewing these propositions of lord North, one remark is very obvious: if the measure now offered was right, it ought to have been adopted sooner; either the minister evinced want of knowledge and wisdom, in incurring the danger and expense of war without an adequate object; or want of firmness and perseverance, in too readily succumbing under misfortune. To wise and magnanimous nations, the hour of distress is not the hour of submission; and the present offers, after the threats and denunciations of ministers, were very naturally and fairly construed to be the concessions of discomfited boasting. Very mortifying it was to the feelings of every patriotic Briton, that his country, which had so often dictated to the most powerful nations of Europe, and had lately, under the auspices of Pitt, acquired such greatness and glory, was now so far changed and humiliated as to be the solicitor of peace from her recent subjects: galling, indeed, these reflections were to the generous pride of patriotism; it was, however, the province of wisdom to attend less to feeling, than to real interest. If it be the highest office of prudence to avoid, in any material case, error of judgment conducive to prejudicial conduct, its employment next in importance is recantation and reform. Dearly purchased experience had taught us, that coercion would not succeed, at least without sacrifices greater than the value of the object; conciliation was therefore expedient. But the proposed system bore the general character of its author, wishing to please all parties, and satisfying none; defeating the purposes of benevolent disposition and acute understanding, by the want of firmness of temper. It was stamped with the same mixture of natural conciliation and adventitious coercion, the same imperfectness of comprehension, which, in the commencing act of its ministry, after proposing the repeal of the other obnoxious duties, reserved the three-penny tax upon tea.

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THE speech with which his lordship introduced his plan, and the propositions themselves, were heard with profound attention, but without marks of approbation from any party, class, or individual in the house. The minister declared, that his present sentiments were those which he had always entertained, and an accurate and minute examiner of his conduct and character could discover, that the change here supposed was perfectly conformable to the uniform tenor of his indecision and fluctuation. But the greater number of his hearers had attended to acts, rather than to the mind and circumstances in which they originated, and though surprised at his plan, wondered much more at the declarations by which it was prefaced. He had been considered by parliament, and represented to the nation, as the person the most tenacious of those rights which he was now willing to resign, and the most averse from that submission which he now proposed to offer. The minister received the earliest support from those who had most vigorously combated his preceding measures, but expressed their fears that the concessions were too late, and that they had waited till France had probably completed a treaty with the American provinces; they would, however, vote for any scheme that tended to reconciliation. The principal bill underwent various animadversions from the usual supporters of the minister. After several material corrections and modifications, it passed in both houses without a division. After its amendments being expressed, the new bill was as follows: "An act
" for removing all doubts and apprehensions concerning
" taxation by the parliament of Great Britain, in any of
" the colonies, provinces, and plantations in North Ame-
" rica and the West Indies; and for repealing so much
" of an act, made in the seventh year of the reign of his
" present majesty, as imposes a duty on tea imported from
" Great Britain into any colony or plantation in America,
" or relates thereto." The second bill, which was a corollary from the first, passed with little opposition. The commissioners were, the commander in chief, lord Howe, the earl of Carlisle, William Eden, esq. and governor Johnstone. The able and learned Adam Fergusson was secretary to the mission.

In the beginning of March, the duke of Grafton informed the peers, that he had received well attested intelligence, that a treaty was concluded, and actually signed between France and America; and demanded from ministers, either an acknowledgment, or denial, of this important act. Lord Weymouth, secretary of state for the southern department, protested that he had heard no account of such alliance being formed, or even intended: but within a week after this declaration, a message was delivered to each house by the respective ministers, to the following effect: "His majesty having been informed, by order of the French king, that a treaty of amity and commerce has been signed between the court of France and certain persons employed by his majesty's revolted subjects in North America, has judged it necessary to direct, that a copy of the avowal delivered by the French ambassador to lord viscount Weymouth be laid before parliament: and at the same time to acquaint them, that his majesty has thought proper, in consequence of this offensive communication on the part of France, to send orders to his minister to withdraw from that court: his majesty is persuaded, that the justice and good faith of his conduct towards foreign powers, and the sincerity of his wishes to preserve the tranquillity of Europe, will be acknowledged by all the world; and his majesty trusts that he shall not stand responsible for the disturbance of tranquillity, if he should find himself called upon to resent so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression on the honour of his crown, and the essential interests of his kingdom, contrary to the most solemn assurances, subversive of the law of nations, and injurious to the rights of every sovereign power in Europe. His majesty relying with the firmest confidence on the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people, is determined to be prepared to exert all the force and resources of his kingdoms, which he trusts will be found adequate to repel every insult and attack; and to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of his country." The minister moved an address to the throne, which, besides conforming to the principal positions of the message, declared the strongest indignation and resentment at the

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unjust and unprovoked conduct of France, arising from that restless and dangerous spirit of ambition and aggrandizement which had so often invaded the rights and threatened the liberties of Europe. It concluded with the strongest assurances of the most zealous assistance and support, and declared the firmest confidence that the whole nation would contribute every possible exertion for the honour and dignity of the crown, and the just rights and essential interests of these kingdoms.

Proposition for the removal of ministers.

Arguments for it :

In the house of commons an amendment was proposed, that his majesty should remove from his councils those ministers, in whom, from experience of the pernicious effects of their past measures, his people could place no confidence in the present momentous situation of public affairs. The chief arguments for the amendment were, that it would be extremely foolish, and no less dangerous, to confide the management of the most arduous war in which Britain had ever engaged, to ministers whose conduct had been a series of ignorance, rashness, and weakness, and had already brought the country, from a high pitch of power and glory, to its present humiliation and distress ; who, having found the kingdom in peace, by their counsels and measures had changed that state of happiness and prosperity into all the horrors and mischiefs of an unnatural, cruel, and destructive civil war : and whose ignorance and obstinacy, disdaining all warning, had plunged this nation into all its present danger and calamity.^p

THERE could not be a more glaring or criminal instance of ministerial negligence and imbecility, than that, in times of peace, they could not discover the designs and transactions of France, until they were openly avowed. Ministers had shown themselves totally unfit for managing our affairs ; therefore they ought not to be trusted with the conduct of greater and more difficult situations. The enemy presumed on the notorious weakness and instability which had long characterised the British counsels. They knew, that if the ministers had been pensioners of France, they could not have promoted the interests of

^p Parliamentary reports.

that country more effectually, than they had actually done. It would be useless to offer any support to his majesty, without informing him at the same time of the incapacity of those to whom he had intrusted the management of public affairs. After such repeated instances of folly, neglect, and incapacity, the nation could repose no confidence in his present ministers; and their removal alone could realize any offers of support, and revive the drooping spirit of the people. That single measure would strike more terror into the enemies of this country, than all the warlike preparations which we were capable of making under the present notorious imbecility of our councils and conduct. Against these arguments the minister and his friends did not offer refutations equally strong; but they contented themselves with asserting their conduct to have been unblamable, and the best which the state of affairs could possibly admit; and repeated their asseverations, of the flourishing state of the country, and its ability to defend itself, and inflict punishment on our enemies for their unprovoked attack. The course of the debate brought forward the question of American independence, and manifested that diversity of opinion on the subject between certain members of opposition, which had before begun to discover itself, and eventually rendered them distinct and even opposite parties. By a part of opposition, the immediate acknowledgment of the independence of America was considered not only as the wisest, but the only measure which could extricate us from the present evils, without still greater losses, and with any probable prospect of deriving future advantage from our colonies. This was the opinion held by the duke of Richmond, the marquis of Rockingham, Messrs. Burke, Fox, and other members of that party; but the earls Chatham, Temple, and Shelburne, and lord Cambden, Messrs. Dunning and Barre, with some other members of both houses, were totally averse from the independence of America. Such a concession they considered as the greatest of all political and national evils, and as including the utter degradation and final ruin of Britain. The other division of opposition admitted the evils to be great, but not equal to those which must be incurred in

against it.

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Mr. Fox
proposes
an inquiry
into the
state of the
nation.

endeavouring to prevent its completion, and thought that no effort for that purpose would be ultimately successful.

AFTER the hostile declaration of France, the inquiry into the state of the nation was principally directed to the condition of the navy. On the 11th of March, Mr. Fox having taken a view of our naval force in the various harbours of this country and the different stations abroad, as the result of the whole proposed a motion, importing that the public had paid, in the last eight years, for the ordinaries and extraordinaries of the navy, though the greater part of that period was free from hostilities, about double the sum to which the estimates for the same service amounted in the eight years commencing with 1755 and ending with 1762, which included the whole of the late war; and that notwithstanding the immense increase of cost, the present naval force of Great Britain and Ireland was inadequate to the very dangerous crisis of public affairs. Ministers neither endeavoured to confute the assertions, nor to overturn the arguments, of their formidable adversary: the force which they could not combat, they endeavoured to elude; the motion, they said, was impolitic, as it tended to expose to the enemy the state and disposition of our maritime strength; and by this common objection, they prevailed on parliament to stifle inquiry.

His inquiry
into the
plans and
prepara-
tions of
the Canada
expedition.

THE great statesman of opposition having failed in his endeavour to investigate the future efficiency of our fleets, was not deterred from prosecuting his inquiries, which he now turned to the past direction and conduct of our armies, and on the 19th of March he proposed to the committee the consideration of the Canada expedition. He undertook to demonstrate that the plan was impolitic, unwise, and incapable of producing any good effect; that the provision made for it was inadequate to the object, and that general Burgoyne had acted agreeably to the tenor of his instructions: if he established these three positions, (he said) he would deduce from them a motion concerning the conduct of lord George Germaine. The ministers opposed the inquiry chiefly for the same reason that they had resisted a former attempt of a similar tendency, the absence of one of the parties; they, however, entered more into the actual merits of the plan than on the preced-

ing occasion, and endeavoured to prove that the northern expedition was, in the first place, a wise and necessary measure ; that it was capable of success, and the design evidently practicable ; and that the noble secretary, in whose department it lay, had omitted nothing which could be done by an attentive minister to ensure its success. Although they did not fully enter upon this justification, yet they brought forward that which they appeared to consider as their principal ground of defence. The question being at length called for, the first resolution was rejected by the majority of 164 to 44. Mr. Fox, enraged and indignant at the event of this division, not only declared that he would not propose another motion ; but, taking the resolution of censure out of his pocket, tore it into pieces, and immediately quitted the house.

THE duke of Richmond early in this session moved and procured a grand committee to inquire into the state of the nation ; and having been very active in forwarding its investigations, on the 7th of April he took a general view of the progress and result. It had not produced, in every case, he said, the desired information, but the effects on the whole had been important and beneficial ; they had ascertained the state of the army and navy, and the vast expenditure which accrued from the American war. Ministers, it was true, had used their utmost efforts to prevent parliament from being informed : but, in opposing the resolutions as unseasonable, they had fully admitted the facts on the allegation of which they were grounded. They were far from pretending that the asserted deficiencies of the army and navy were unfounded ; they objected not to the truth of the statement, but to the policy of the publication. Viewing the state of the resources made known through the exertions of the committee, he proposed to finish the inquiry by an address to the throne, which should exhibit an abstract of the information obtained, the resolutions proposed, and the general inferences which sprung from the whole.

The duke of Richmond proposes an address to the throne.

FOUNDED upon these bases, the projected address represented to his majesty THE STATE OF HIS DOMINIONS ; and expressed the indignation of the house against the conduct of ministers, by which it was caused. In this

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Schism of
opposition
on the
question of
American
independ-
ence.

calamitous, though he trusted not desperate, situation of public affairs, they reposed their ultimate hope in his majesty's paternal goodness. It reminded the king of the constitutional principles, whence issued the revolution, and the accession of his illustrious house ; and the great and increasing prosperity of the country while its government adhered to these principles. It recalled to his majesty's recollection THE PROSPEROUS AND GLORIOUS STATE IN WHICH HE FOUND THESE REALMS : contrasted the condition of that time with the *present distress*, and declared a confidence that the wisdom and goodness of the sovereign would put an end to that system under which so fatal a reverse had taken place. This was the substance of the duke of Richmond's address, interspersed through which was poignant asperity against his majesty's court and administration. While proposing remedies for the alleged evils, he insisted that the only sure means of extrication from a war with the colonies, was the recognition of their unqualified independence. This was a proposition, to which not only lord North, but the most firmly and violently and ardent supporter of coercive measures was not more inimical than the illustrious champion of conciliation, the earl of Chatham. His lordship had that session frequently attended the house of peers, less from the relaxation of distemper than from the calls of duty, which the increasing calamities of his country made him consider as every day more imperious. In a bodily state fitted only for the stillness and quiet of a bed of sickness, he encountered the active warfare of the senate, hoping his counsels might at length be admitted by those who were experiencing such evils from former rejection and intractability, and that, in his old age, he might contribute to restore part of the prosperity, greatness, and glory, which he had acquired for his country in the vigour of his life, and which left her when he ceased to guide her affairs. His exertion, in the former part of the session, so much beyond his bodily strength, had increased his distemper ; but informed of the business that was to be agitated, and aware of the doctrines which would be brought forward, he thought it incumbent on himself to render it manifest to the world, that though he agreed with the marquis of Rockingham and his adherents

in reprobating the system of ministry, he totally differed from them on the question of American independence. He accordingly betook himself to the senate, of which, for near half a century, he had been the brightest luminary. Having arrived in the house, he refreshed himself in the lord chancellor's room, until he learned that business was about to begin. The infirm statesman was led into the house of peers, attended by his son-in-law, lord Mahon, and resting on the arm of his second son, Mr. William Pitt. He was richly dressed in a superb suit of black velvet, with a full wig, and covered up to the knees in flannel. He was pale and emaciated, but the darting quickness, force, and animation of his eyes, and the expression of his whole countenance, showed that his mind *retained* its primeval perspicacity, brilliancy, and strength. The lords stood up, and made a lane for him to pass through to the bench of the earls, and with the gracefulness of deportment, for which he was so eminently distinguished, he bowed to them as he proceeded. Having taken his seat, he listened with the most profound attention to the speech of the duke of Richmond. When his grace had finished, lord Chatham rose : he lamented that, at so important a crisis, his bodily infirmities had interfered so often with his regular attendance on his duty in parliament. "I have this day (said he) made an effort beyond the powers of my constitution, to come down to the house, perhaps the last time I shall enter its walls, to express my indignation against the proposition of yielding the sovereignty of America. My lord, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me, that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the load of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture ; but, my lords, while I have sense and memory, I never will consent to tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions. Shall a people so lately the terror of the world, now fall prostrate before the house of Bourbon ? It is impossible. I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom ; but I trust it has still sufficient to main-

Last efforts
of lord
Chatham.

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tain its just rights, though I know them not ; and any.
state, my lords, is better than despair. Let us at least
make one effort ; and, if we must fall, let us fall like
men."

His illness,

death,

and cha-
racter.

THE duke of Richmond declared his grief and horror at the dismemberment of the empire to be as great as that of any man in the house or nation, but how was it to be avoided : he himself was totally ignorant of the means of resisting with success the combination of America with France and Spain. He did not know how to preserve the dependence of America. If any person could prevent such an evil, lord Chatham was the man ; but what were the means that great statesman would propose. Lord Chatham, agitated by this appeal, made an eager effort at its conclusion to rise ; but before he could utter a word, pressing his hand to his heart, he fell down in a convulsive fit. The duke of Cumberland and lord Temple, who were nearest him, caught him in their arms. The house was immediately in commotion, strangers were ordered to depart, and the house was adjourned. Lord Chatham being carried into an adjoining apartment, medical assistance soon arrived. Recovering in some degree, he was conveyed in a litter to his villa at Hayes in Kent, and there he lingered till the 11th of May, when he breathed his last, in the seventieth year of his age.

THUS died William Pitt, earl of Chatham ; his death being hastened by his efforts to save his country, whose interest and glory it had been the business of his life to promote. Many as are the examples of uncommon ability which English history presents, she has none to record more brilliant, more forcible, or more beneficial to the times in which it operated. Surpassing other senators in glowing, energetic, and commanding eloquence, he still farther exceeded them in political wisdom ; astonishing parliament as an orator, he astonished the nation and all mankind as a statesman. Rarely have been united in the same person, such powers of thought, speech, and action. Grasping the principles, circumstances, and relations to be considered and discussed, he instantaneously perceived the arguments to be adduced in deliberation, or the means to be employed in conduct. Sagacious to discover, rapid and powerful to

invent and combine, luminous and strong to explain and impress, he was decisive and prompt in execution. He not only discerned and chose effectual means, but applied them at the instant of time which was most favourable to their efficacy. Thoroughly master of the human character, he perfectly comprehended the general and peculiar talents and qualities of all, with whom either accident, inclination, or duty induced him to converse. Hence he selected the fittest instruments for executing, in the manifold departments of public service, his wise, bold, and sublime plans. Not his intellectual powers only, but the estimation resulting from these, in union with his moral conduct, gave to Mr. Pitt an authority far transcending that of other ministers: inaccessible to avarice, unseduced by pleasure and luxury, the abstinence of his dispositions, and the temperance of his habits, confirmed that confidence which his wisdom and magnanimity created: destined for the army, he did not receive an academic education. The groundwork of erudition was indeed laid in classical knowledge;^q but the superstructure was left to himself. His studies were ethics, poetry, eloquence, history, and politics; especially the history and politics of his country. Thus he was, in a great measure, self-taught. His genius, though extraordinary in force and fertility, and enriched with ample materials, not being disciplined in proportion to its capacity and knowledge, did not habitually exert itself in close deduction;^r but, for grandeur of conception and comprehensiveness of views, force of reasoning, depth of conclusion, and sagacity of prediction; strength and sublimity of imagery, and appositeness of allusion; for pathetic in every kind and variety; for wielding at will the judgment, fancies, and passions of his hearers, William Pitt stood

^q At Eaton, where he was the cotemporary and friend of Lyttleton and Fielding.

^r Reasoning does not merely depend upon power, but on power confirmed and facilitated by habit. Every able man is not necessarily a habitual logician: nor is every age and country which exhibits works of great ability, necessarily eminent for ratiocinative efforts. In the reign of George the second, close argument was not the principal characteristic of our senatorial oratory; brilliant and powerful images to charm the fancy, pathetic descriptions and exhibitions to impress the feelings, aided by graceful elocution and delivery to strike the senses, were much more prominent in the most approved models, than an unbrokeu chain of antecedents and consequences merely conducting truth to the understanding. Thus the state of the senate encouraged that mode of eloquence which the early studies and pursuits of Mr. Pitt tended to bestow.

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unrivalled. But his wisdom, magnanimity, and energy, are most clearly beheld in their effects. At the beginning of the seven years war, the nation, perceiving their country neglected by ministers, her arms discomfited and inglorious, and her spirits drooping and desponding, called on Mr. Pitt for relief. Unsupported by court interest, obnoxious to the confederacy which had long prevailed, his genius overpowered intrigue. He came to the highest office, when none else by holding it could save the state. Having risen exclusively by ability himself, his chief object was to bring every kind of ability into action which could be beneficial to the country. Disdaining to govern by parties, he absorbed them all into his own vortex. From torpidity, weakness, defeat, disgrace, and dejection, he changed the condition of the nation to ardour, strength, victory, glory, and triumph. Nor did Britain by her affection, gratitude, and admiration, or Europe by her astonishment, bear stronger testimonies of his exalted merit, than France by her hatred and terror for the name of Pitt. As Britain flourished while this statesman conducted her councils, from the time his direction ceased her decline commenced; but, as he had caused her elevation by his own wisdom and vigour, he endeavoured to prevent her downfall through the rashness, folly, and weakness of others. From the rise of this innovating system of colonial policy, he perceived its tendency; and foresaw and foretold its effects. He tried to avert the evil, but his attempts were vain: a feeble body, a constitution debilitated by intense application, and labouring under grievous malady, obstructed his regular attendance in parliament, to deprecate pernicious measures; but, when he did appear, his speeches deserved record as the emphatic dictates of prophesying wisdom. Nature arrayed transcendency of genius, and grandeur of soul, in pleasing and striking colours, and bestowed on this favourite son an animated and expressive countenance, a tall and graceful figure, with a dignified mien and deportment.

THIS statesman possessed ambition in common with other great minds that are engaged in active life. If, however, he loved power, it was neither to enrich himself nor his friends, but to aggrandize his country, and humble her enemies. A more appropriate feature in his character,

was contempt for tame mediocrity. He perhaps too much disdained that dexterity and address, which, though easily attained, and no indication of superior talents, often smooths the road for the execution of wise and beneficial plans ; such a man must have seen the inferiority of his colleagues ; but it was not necessary to his political purposes to make them feel that inferiority. His unbending resolution is an object of regret to patriots, as it produced his resignation, when his services were so essential to his country. In the various relations of private life, lord Chatham was amiable and estimable. He married a lady, whose talents and character rendered her worthy of such a husband ; whose conversation solaced his mind in the hours of infirmity and pain, and whose views coincided, and efforts cooperated, with his own, in the tuition of their several children. Few and trivial were the blemishes, which merely showed that this extraordinary man was not exempted from the imperfections of humanity ; but the historian who desires to narrate the truth, must endeavour to hand down to posterity William Pitt, earl of Chatham, as one of the chief glories of England.

WHEN the intelligence of lord Chatham's death arrived, the house of commons being sitting, colonel Barre, in a concise but just eulogium, expressed the obligation of the country to the deceased statesman, and moved an address to his majesty, for directions that his remains should be interred at the public expense : the motion received general approbation. A monument was also proposed, and unanimously resolved to be erected in Westminster abbey. The following day it was stated to the house, that the illustrious object of their veneration, highly as he had benefited the nation, had been by no means equally attentive to his own private fortune ; and that notwithstanding his opportunities, he had left his family destitute of all suitable provision. An address was proposed and voted to his majesty, by which an annuity of 4000l. per annum was settled for ever on those heirs of the late earl of Chatham to whom the earldom might descend, and 20,000l. were granted for the payment of his debts.

Tribute of respect and gratitude paid to his memory by parliament.

TOWARDS the close of this session, application was made to parliament in favour of Ireland, to relieve that

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Applica-
tion to par-
liament in
favour of
Ireland.

country from sundry restraints respecting their manufactures and trade: these restrictions injured Ireland, it was alleged, without serving Britain. From the facts presented by lord Nugent, who introduced the business, and other collateral evidence, it appeared that the trade of Ireland had suffered severely during the war; that the exportation of Irish manufactures, was in a great measure suspended; that thence numbers of the people were deprived of their stated employments, and rendered destitute of the means of subsistence. The decay of the trade was still more severely felt, in consequence of very heavy additions which had been recently made to the civil establishment, by the increase of pensions and other burdensome appointments: the relief solicited was to take off some of the many incumbrances which oppressed both the export and import traffic of that kingdom. In order to favour the woollen manufactory of England, the Irish had been hindered from manufacturing their own wool: the consequence was, that Irish wool was smuggled over into France, to the great detriment of British manufacturers, as with such materials France would soon be able to rival England. Bills were introduced to revive the trade and manufactures of Ireland, without injuring this country. The relief proposed in the house of commons was, first, that the Irish might be permitted to export directly to the British plantations or settlements all merchandise which should be the produce of that kingdom or of Great Britain, wool and woollen manufactures only excepted; as also foreign certificate goods legally imported: 2dly, that a direct importation should be allowed to all commodities being the produce of the British plantations, tobacco only excepted: 3dly, that the direct exportation of glass manufactured in Ireland should be permitted to all places except Great Britain: 4thly, that the importation of cotton yarn the manufacture of Ireland should be allowed, duty free, in Great Britain: as also, 5thly, the importation of sail-cloth and cordage. Bills founded on these propositions encountered a strong opposition. The projected change alarmed the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, and also the manufacturers of Lancashire and the county of Nottingham, who strenuously opposed the admission of Ire-

land to a participation of the rights of British subjects; and a general alarm was spread through most of the trading and manufacturing parts of the kingdom. They considered the admittance of Ireland to any share of British trade, as not only destructive of their property, but being equally subversive of their rights. They were as little disposed to consent that the people of Ireland should cultivate their own manufactures, and dispose of their native commodities at the proper foreign markets, as they were to admit them to any limited degree of participation. After much discussion, in which the supporters of the bill had the advantage, it was agreed by both parties to defer the final adjustment until the next session of parliament. The opposers gave way to partial enlargements with regard to Irish trade, from which its supporters hoped that, by allowing them another session before its final determination, they might become well disposed to promote some of the propositions.

The consideration is postponed.

SIR PHILIP JENNINGS CLERK introduced a bill for restraining contractors with government from a seat in parliament, unless the contract should be made at a public bidding. The arguments on both sides were obvious: by the proposers of the law it was alleged, that contracts were often granted, on the most advantageous terms, for purposes of corruption: by its impugners, that it would be very unjust to deprive an individual of his privileges as a British subject, because he had engaged to furnish at a stipulated price articles wanted for the public service. Members of parliament, who were debarred from this source of mercantile profit, if disposed to traffic in corruption, could easily accomplish their desire clandestinely through agents: the bill was rejected by a majority of only two, the numbers being against it 115, for it 113.

Bill for excluding contractors from the house of commons.

On the 14th of May, near the close of the session, sir George Saville proposed a bill for the repeal of certain penalties and disabilities, that were established by an act of the tenth of William III. for preventing the farther growth of popery. The legal and political ability of Mr. Dunning was chiefly employed in explaining the evils now proposed to be removed. By the act in question, popish priests or jesuits, found to officiate in the service of the

Repeal of king William's act respecting Roman catholics.

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Romish church, incurred the penalties of felony if foreigners, and of high treason if natives: the successions of popish heirs educated abroad were forfeited, and their estates descended to the next protestant heir: a son, or other nearest protestant relation, might take possession of the estate of a father or other next kinsman of the popish persuasion, during the life of the real proprietor: papists were prevented from acquiring any legal property by *purchase*, a term which in law included every mode of acquiring property, but descent: and thus the various sources of acquisition were shut up from the Roman catholics. The mildness of government had softened the rigour of the law; but it was to be remembered, that popish priests constantly lay at the mercy of the basest of mankind, common informers. On the evidence of any of these wretches, the magisterial and judicial powers were necessitated to enforce all the shameful penalties of the act. Others of these punishments held out powerful temptations to horrible and flagitious crimes. They seemed fitted to poison the sources of domestic felicity, to dissolve civil, moral, and religious obligations and duties, and to loosen all the bonds of society. Besides the intolerant and oppressive principle of the act, it appeared from the history of its enactment,^s that it was a measure of party intrigue more than of general policy. Even if there then existed reasons which justified severity, they were no longer in force. The Roman catholics had conducted themselves with unquestionable propriety during the present reign, and had that very session presented a petition, expressive of their loyalty and attachment to the king and government, and their resolution, at the risk of their lives and fortunes, to defend their king and country against the apprehended invasion of the French and all their enemies. The ministerial party was extremely well inclined to show favour to such meritorious subjects; and, though aware of their general unpopularity, they did not themselves choose to hazard a proposition which would most probably excite alarm among the protestants; they very gladly adopted therefore the measure when brought forward by opposition, and the bill passed both houses without a division.

^s See Burnet's History of his own Times.

THE supplies for this year were sixty thousand seamen, with a considerable augmentation of land forces. The ways and means were, a loan of six millions at three per cent., with an annuity of two pounds ten shillings for a certain number of years, or for life; the sum of 480,000*l.* was raised by a lottery, and two millions by exchequer bills. The new taxes were, an additional duty of eight guineas per ton imposed on all French wines, and four guineas on all other wines, six-pence in the pound on houses valued from five to fifty pounds a year, and one shilling on all above fifty pounds. The house tax bill was strongly opposed, as unjust, partial, and oppressive; from the high value of the houses in London, it was asserted that nine-tenths of the burden would be borne by the metropolis. It was answered, that the value of houses arose chiefly from their situation, which rendered them pleasant, convenient, or profitable to their occupiers, and that the advantages much more than compensated the expense even with this addition; that, in other commercial places, rent rose in proportion to their lucrative situation, and that other parts of the kingdom would contribute a much greater share of the tax than had been asserted: the houses in every town or village as well as in London, would pay in proportion to the benefit arising from the situation. Beside the specific sums granted by parliament, an application was made for a vote of credit. This requisition occasioned a very warm debate: opposition contended, that the incapacity of administration was so glaring, and their conduct so very absurd and ruinous, that it would be extremely imprudent to trust to their discretion. Ministers defended their own measures, and insisted that a vote of credit was both usual and necessary in such circumstances, and that, though the assertions of opposition, if *proved*, would demonstrate them unfit for their offices; yet, until the allegations were established on better grounds than declamatory invective, the present counselors, having the confidence of parliament, remained in their offices; and the public service therefore required, they should be furnished with the means of discharging their duties. The minority appeared not to have meant

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Supplies.
and taxes.

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A motion
for an in-
quiry re-
specting
expendi-
ture,

any objection to the vote of credit, since, notwithstanding the eloquence exerted on the subject, they suffered it to pass without a division.

THE charge of boundless expenditure was a frequent theme of animadversion during the session, and a committee was proposed for inspecting the public accounts; but the motion was controverted by the supporters of administration, who declared, that the prudence and economy of ministers were so very great and satisfactory, that all examination of accounts would be superfluous. If undue profits in some particular instances had been obtained by contractors, the treasury would oblige them to refund such sums, as soon as the necessary inquiry should be made. The inspection might be productive of great mischief, by disseminating ill founded jealousies and suspicions among the people. Although this reasoning, that it was unnecessary to investigate the management of pecuniary stewards, because they themselves and their connexions asserted that they were prudent and economical, may not convince an impartial reader, yet it convinced the majority in the house of commons, and the desired inquiry was prevented.

is rejected.

ON the 3d of June, parliament was prorogued. His majesty in his speech on this occasion, after returning thanks to parliament for their wise deliberations and vigorous efforts, expressed himself respecting the interference of France, with a dignity and magnanimity worthy of the first personage in the first nation of the universe. He spoke the merited resentment of conscious justice, supported by conscious power. “ My desire (said our king) “ to preserve the tranquillity of Europe, has been uniform “ and sincere; I reflect with great satisfaction, that I have “ made the faith of treaties, and the law of nations, the rule “ of my conduct; and that it has been my constant care to “ give no just cause of offence to any foreign power: let “ that power, by whom this tranquillity shall be disturbed, “ answer to their subjects, and to the world, for all the fatal “ consequences of war: the vigour and firmness of my par- “ liament have enabled me to be prepared for such events “ and emergencies as may happen; and I trust that the

Dignified
answer of
his majes-
ty.

“experienced valour and discipline of my fleets and armies,
“and the loyal and united ardour of the nation, armed
“and animated in the defence of every thing that is dear
“to them, will be able, under the protection of Divine
“Providence, to defeat all the enterprises which the ene-
“mies of my crown may presume to undertake, and con-
“vince them how dangerous it is to provoke the spirit
“and strength of Great Britain.”

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*Campaign opens in America.—Operations by detachments from general Howe's army.—Howe resigns the command—festival in honour of him, under the name of Mischienza—departs for Europe—and is succeeded by sir Henry Clinton.—Arrival of commissioners from Britain.—The Americans refuse to treat, unless as an independent nation.—Evacuation of Philadelphia—and march through the Jerseys.—Battle of Freehold court house—the British army is successful—and arrives at New York.—D'Estaing arrives with a French fleet—maritime operations.—Attempts upon Rhode Island.—Partial and detached expeditions.—D'Estaing departs for the West Indies.—Farther proceedings of the commissioners—issue a proclamation without effect—return to England.—Congress publish a counter manifesto.—Hostilities in Europe.—Admiral Keppel takes the command of the channel fleet.—Capture of the *Licorne* French frigate—of the *Pallas*.—Keppel returns to Portsmouth for a reinforcement—sails in pursuit of the enemy—descries the French fleet off Ushant.—Battle of the 27th of July indecisive.—The French fleet retires during the night.—Apprehensive of a lee shore, Keppel forbears pursuit.—Captures by frigates and privateers.—Balance greatly favourable to England.—Depredations by Paul Jones—plunders the seat of lord Selkirk.—Crimination and recrimination by Keppel and Palliser—are respectively tried and acquitted.*

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Campaign
opens in
America.

FROM political proceedings we now return to military transactions. The hostile armies at Philadelphia and Valley Forge passed the severity of the winter within a few miles of each other, in great tranquillity. Spring arrived, and the commander in chief continued to repose himself at Philadelphia ; he, however, sent out several occasional detachments, which displayed British intre-

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Operations
by detach-
ments
from gene-
ral Howe's
army.

pidity and skill in desultory operations, without any material result. In the beginning of March, colonel Mawhood was sent with the 27th and 46th regiments, and the New Jersey volunteers, to make a descent on the coast of Jersey, to procure forage, and assist the loyalists, who were severely oppressed by Livingston, the American governor. Various creeks communicate with the Delaware on the Jersey side ; over the Allewas, one of these, there were three bridges ; Thompson's farthest up, St. Quinton's in the middle, and Hancock's next the river. At the two last the provincials determined to make a stand. Mawhood having pretended to retreat, enticed the Americans to cross St. Quinton's bridge, and fall into an ambuscade which he had previously formed ; the enemy being surrounded, most of them were either killed, taken prisoners, or drowned. Major Simcoe, being employed to attack the party posted at Hancock's bridge, crossed the creek in boats by night with a party of soldiers ; assailed, surprised, and dispersed the Americans ; and secured a passage for the whole British detachment : colonel Mawhood having completed his forage, returned to Philadelphia. In the beginning of May, an American brigade, commanded by general Lacy of the Pennsylvania militia, being posted at the Crooked billet, on one of the chief roads between the country and Philadelphia, obstructed the approaches of farmers with provisions for the city. That enterprising and intelligent officer, major Simcoe, having perceived this position and discovered its object, proposed to march round with the queen's rangers, so as to gain the rear of the enemy, while another party should lie in ambuscade to intercept their retreat to Washington's army. The scheme being approved, colonel Abercrombie was appointed to command the ambuscade, and to lie in wait till he should hear the firing of Simcoe's corps. On the 30th of May, major Simcoe set off with his detachment by the projected route, and afterwards Abercrombie departed with about four hundred light infantry, a large party of light dragoons, and horses, for the sake of greater expedition, to mount his foot soldiers. The colonel could not reach the place of his destination at the appointed time during the night ; eager, however, to support major

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Simcoe, he sent forward his cavalry and light infantry. The commander of the advanced corps having proceeded as far as Lacy's outpost, was seen and fired at by the enemy's sentinel, but did not retire. The American commander concluding a stronger force to be at hand, immediately filed up the country, and, by abandoning his baggage escaped the pursuit. The British troops having dislodged the provincials, returned with the captured baggage to Philadelphia ; and, by the success of this excursion, greatly facilitated the conveyance of provisions to the British army. An expedition being sent under majors Maitland and Simcoe, destroyed a great number of American vessels, that had escaped the preceding campaign at the capture of the forts on the Delaware. These desultory enterprises proved that British courage and conduct by land and water were equal to the efforts of former times, however little they conduced to the promotion of British interest.

Howe resigns the command.

FOR several months, sir William Howe had resolved to resign his command, and intimated his intention to lord George Germaine. His alleged ground for desiring to be recalled was, that he had not received the necessary confidence and support from administration. Ministers expressed the utmost surprise at his complaint, the grounds of which they affirmed were fully confuted by the written authority with which he was intrusted, and the force with which he was furnished. The requested permission, however, was granted, and the general accordingly prepared to depart for Europe.

Festival in honour of him, under the name of Mischienza.

THE easy and agreeable manners and indulgent conduct of general Howe, had gained the affection of many of his officers. Those viewing his exploits and services through the partial medium of attachment, attributed to them a merit and efficacy greater than that which has been allowed them by the rigorous scrutiny of impartial judgment. As a testimony of the high estimation in which they held their general, some of his officers gave in honour of him, when about to resign his command, a festival, which they denominated a Mischienza. The exhibition, indeed, was of a miscellaneous nature, and partook partly of the nature of Roman spectacles on the return of vic-

torious generals to their grateful country ; the general marched through the army between two triumphal arches. His train of attendants, however, seven silken knights of the blended rose, seven silken knights of the burning mountain, and fourteen damsels representing the paragons of knight errantry, called before the imagination the *fabulous* glory of chivalrous ages. A tilt and tournament, or *mock representation of warlike achievements*, made a part of the entertainment. On the top of each triumphal arch was placed a figure of Fame, ornamented with stars, blowing from her trumpet, in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels.*^t While the multitude were dazzled by the splendor of this magnificent spectacle, some of the bystanders, whose fancies had not been sublimed into the regions of romance, but suffered their memories fully to recollect, and their judgments to appreciate, actual performance, wondered where, when, and how these *immortal laurels* had been earned. Soon after this signal testimony of esteem and admiration had been adduced in favour of his exploits as commander in chief, sir William Howe returned to Europe, and the office which he left was conferred on sir Henry Clinton.

Howe de-
parts for
Europe,
and is suc-
ceeded by
sir Henry
Clinton,

THE British commissioners now arrived with conciliatory propositions. To the success of their mission, many obstacles were foreseen ; but some had lately occurred which had not been expected. Before the completion of the treaty between France and the Americans, the court of Versailles stated a difficulty, without the removal of which they said they could not accede to an alliance. Were Britain and America to be reconciled, on terms by which the latter should renounce her independence, the engagements which she might have contracted would be no longer valid. To destroy this ground of objection, the congress, in November 1777, entered into a resolution, declaring, that they would reject all proposals for a treaty with the king of Great Britain which should be inconsistent with the independence of the United States, or with such alliances as might be formed under their authority. In the following April, having seen copies of the conciliatory bills, they, on the 22d of that month,

arrival of
the com-
missioners
from Bri-
tain.

^t Annual Register, 1778.

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passed resolutions, expressing reprobation of the conduct of the British parliament, as persevering in the same coercive plans, but by indirect and insidious means ; and declaring their contempt of the artifices and dissimulation by which England endeavoured to put them in execution. The general spirit of their proceedings was continuance in hostility to Britain, and amity to France ; and the tendency of their acts was to promote the same sentiments among the people. On the 2d of May, Silas Dean arrived at York Town with copies of the treaties concluded between France and America at Paris. The congress immediately published a gazette, which, besides a summary of the whole, exhibited the most flattering articles, accompanied by comments, in which they extolled to the people the extraordinary equity, generosity, and unparalleled honour of the French king. They appeared to consider Spain as already a party in the confederacy ; the other great powers of Europe as favourable to America, and desiring the humiliation of England. In such a state of American enmity to Great Britain, and exulting hopes of success, the commissioners arrived with their pacificatory proposals. On the 9th of June, they applied for a passport to their secretary, doctor Fergusson, who, they intended, should convey their propositions to the congress, and conduct the negotiation with that body. General Washington refused a passport, until he should consult the congress ; whereupon the commissioners forwarded their papers by the ordinary military posts, and they reached the congress on the 11th of June. On the 17th, a brief, but decisive answer was returned by its president, manifesting a determination to maintain their independence, to adhere to the engagements with France, which as an independent nation they had contracted, and to reject the present proposition, which did not admit that independence. Reprobating the war as unjust in principle and barbarous in conduct, they notwithstanding declared their willingness to enter, as an independent state, into any negotiation consistent with their present treaties.^u In a paper of the same date, the

The Americans refuse to treat, unless as an independent nation.

^u See Mr. President Henry Laurence's answer to the British commissioners, dated June 17th, 1778, in the collection of State papers for that year.

congress issued its approbation of general Washington's refusal of a passport to the British secretary.

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THIS answer plainly showed, that all attempts to conciliate America on the principles and plan proposed by parliament would be ineffectual, and proved that Britain either should have persisted in coercion, or offered terms more suitable to the present state of sentiments and affairs. The offer, indeed, by flattering the pride, encouraged the perseverance of the American republicans; it confirmed the authority of the congress, and proved to Britain, that the only alternative was entire conquest, or the acknowledgment (really at least, if not verbally) that they were no longer subject to our power; it held out to the loyalists the discomfiture of their party, the proscription of their property, and exile from their native country; and dispirited the officers and soldiers themselves, by deeply impressing them with an idea, that the service in which they were employed was considered as hopeless.

A PLAN of operations had been formed for the campaign, should the proposed treaty fail. The first movement enjoined by the British ministers through lord Carlisle to the commander in chief, was the evacuation of Philadelphia. The abandonment of the chief city in America, and the principal object of so powerful an army during the whole campaign, was by no means calculated to dishearten our enemies, or the Americans, or to encourage the loyalists; nevertheless there existed circumstances which rendered such a measure expedient. We were no longer at war against the revolted colonies alone, but were contending with the chief maritime power of the world after our own. France had sent out from Toulon a great naval armament, of which the destination might either be America or the West Indies; if the former, the fleet under lord Howe, very inferior in force, might be blocked up within the long and winding river of Delaware, that abounded in shoals and other impediments to navigation: besides, the army ought to occupy a station from which reinforcements might be most easily and expeditiously sent wherever they were required. For this purpose Philadelphia, so distant from the sea, was totally unfit; by returning to New York, they could despatch troops to any other situation that might

Evacuation
of Phila-
delphia.

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The army
marches
through
the Jer-
seys.

most advantageously employ their exertions : for these reasons, government determined to direct the evacuation of Philadelphia.

ON the 18th of June, the army passed the Delaware, and the same day encamped on the Jersey shore. The country through which they had to march, was strong, and intersected by defiles ; lest these being occupied should obstruct his progress, sir Henry Clinton thought it necessary to carry along with him a large supply of provisions, which, together with the baggage, greatly retarded the progress of the army. The excessive heat of the weather, the closeness of the roads through the woods, the constant labour of constructing or repairing bridges in a country abounding in creeks, brooks, and marshes, were all severely felt by the British forces. Washington, having discovered the design of Clinton, detached general Maxwell to obstruct a retreat, until he himself should cross the American army. For several days the provincials were not able materially to interrupt the British army ; our light troops expelled them from the defiles, and the only obstructions arose from the bridges being destroyed. The army now came to a place where the road was divided into two branches : that to the left was the shortest, but the river Rariton intervened ; the passage of which, in the face of an enemy superior in number, might be both difficult and dangerous ; more especially as intelligence was received, that Gates was advancing from the north, to form a junction with Washington near that river. Sir Henry Clinton accordingly took the most circuitous route, nearer to the coast. Having proceeded some miles, he encamped on the 27th on a high ground in the neighbourhood of Freehold court house. Washington had before kept to the left, and being now reinforced, posted himself within a few miles of the British rear. Clinton having sent forward the baggage under Knyphausen with the first division of the army, he himself with the last waited the approach of the enemy, and on the 28th of June was informed that large bodies of the provincials were marching on both his flanks, while a considerable division followed himself. Suspecting that the object of the Americans on his flanks was to overtake Knyphausen, who was now retarded by

defiles, he determined to attack the provincials who hovered on his rear, that they might recal their detachments from annoying Knyphausen. Though he was by this time, in prosecution of his march, descended into a plain, and the enemy had occupied the eminence which he had just left, he attacked them, compelled them to fly, and would have destroyed the whole front division, had not Washington, by occupying a defile with his main body, repressed the pursuit. The light troops who had been sent forward to attack Knyphausen, were repulsed by that general, and recalled, to join and support the main army. The loss of the British that day, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to three hundred and fifty-eight; that of the Americans, to three hundred and sixty-one. Little as was the difference in point of numbers, it appears, from his subsequent conduct, that general Washington thought himself worsted, as he did not afterwards attempt to disturb the British retreat, but marched away to the left towards the North river. The circumstances of the engagement produced a quarrel between Lee and Washington. According to Washington, Lee, who commanded the advanced corps, had disobeyed orders, in not attacking the enemy when they were on the plain, and he on the declivity; and farther charged him with want either of conduct or courage, in retreating before the British, though he was so advantageously posted. Lee wrote a very angry letter; Washington answered; Lee replied still more violently: a court martial was demanded and ordered; the charges were, disrespect to the general, and misbehaviour in an unnecessary and shameful retreat. He was suspended from his command for twelve months. Meanwhile the British army arrived in safety at Sandy Hook, where they found lord Howe landed the preceding day: on the 5th of July the army embarking, came to New York the same night.

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Battle of
Freehold
court
house.

The Bri-
tish army
is success-
ful;

and arrives
at New
York.

D'Estaing
arrives
with a
French
fleet.

THE count D'Estaing sailed from Toulon the 13th of April, with twelve ships of the line and six frigates, carrying a considerable number of troops on board; but, from adverse winds, did not pass the straits of Gibraltar till the 15th of May. The British ministry, who were not unapprised of this equipment, got ready a fleet of an equal number of ships, the command of which was given to vice-

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admiral Byron. The armament left Portsmouth on the 20th of May, and proceeding to Plymouth, finally sailed from thence on the 9th of June, after such advices had been received as no longer left it doubtful that the Toulon squadron was bound to North America. D'Estaing arrived on the coast of Virginia on the 5th of July, but hearing of the evacuation of Philadelphia, sailed to the northward; and on the 11th of July, in the evening, came to an anchor off New York, with an apparent design of attempting to enter the harbour. The naval force under lord Howe consisted only of six ships of the line, and four of fifty guns, with a proportional number of frigates and smaller vessels. Intelligence of the count D'Estaing's approach having been received some days before he came in sight, a masterly disposition of their force for the defence of the harbour was made, under the immediate direction of the admiral, whose exertions were nobly seconded by the universal ardour which prevailed, not only in the navy, army, and transport service, but among all ranks and classes of people at New York. Some time after D'Estaing's arrival, the wind was unfavourable to the execution of his supposed intention; but on the 22d of July it changed to the eastward, and the French fleet was seen weighing anchor. The long meditated attack, it was now supposed, would instantly commence; and so confident were all it would prove abortive, that the critical moment which was to decide, not only the fate of the British fleet but of the army, was expected with impatience. But D'Estaing, to their great disappointment, as soon as his ships had weighed anchor, instead of attempting to enter the harbour, made sail to the southward. He afterwards changed his course, and steered directly to Rhode Island, before which he arrived on the 29th of July. Lord Howe being informed of the enemy's station, determined to attempt the preservation of the island; but, as he was inferior in number, not to venture an engagement, without some considerable advantage, which might counterbalance their superiority. For several months the expulsion of the British troops from Rhode Island, had been in contemplation of the provincials. In spring, general Sullivan was sent to take the command in its neighbourhood, and made preparation for

invading this province. To these dispositions, major general Pigot, who commanded at Rhode Island, was not inattentive; he readily perceived their object, and, in order to retard them, sent two detachments under lieutenant colonel Campbell and major Eyre, who destroyed or took the vessels, naval stores, and ordnance, which were prepared for the invasion, and burnt their ship timber and dockyards. From these losses, the provincials were not in readiness for cooperation, when D'Estaing arrived off Rhode Island. Lord Howe, after being detained four days by contrary winds, put to sea on the 6th of August with the British fleet, which was now increased to eight ships of the line, five of fifty guns, two of forty-four guns, and four frigates, with three fireships, two bombs, and a number of smaller vessels. Justly deeming the weather gage too great an advantage to be added to the superior force of the enemy, the British admiral skilfully and ably contended for that important object, while D'Estaing was no less anxious to preserve it in his own favour. The contest of seamanship prevented an engagement on that day; but the wind on the following day still continuing adverse to the design of the British admiral, he determined to make the best of the present circumstances, and to engage the enemy; forming the line in such a manner, as to be joined by three fireships which were under the tow of as many frigates. When the fleets were about to engage, a strong gale of wind increased to a tremendous storm, and continuing for near two days, by separating the fleets, not only prevented immediate battle, but so dispersed and damaged the vessels of both parties, as to render an engagement for some time impracticable. The accidental meeting of single ships after the tempest, produced conflicts which afforded new specimens of British valour and nautical skill. Captain Dawson of the *Renown* of fifty guns, on the evening of the 13th, fell in with the French admiral's ship, the *Languedoc* of eighty-four, and notwithstanding the great difference of metal, attacked her with evident advantage, until darkness put an end to the contest. The next morning the gallant Dawson was preparing to renew the conflict, when the appearance of six more of the enemy's ships compelled him to retire. The same evening, cap-

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tain Hotham, with the Preston of fifty guns, attacked the *Tonant*, a French ship of 80 guns, with similar vigour and success; being also the next morning obliged to desist, by the arrival of several other ships. On the 16th of August, captain Raynor of the *Isis*, also of fifty guns, attacked the *Cæsar* of 74, and after an engagement for an hour and a half, forced her to retreat; but being herself damaged in her rigging, was incapable of pursuit. The loss of the English ship consisted of one killed and fifteen wounded; of the enemy, fifty killed and wounded. The French ship was, besides, so much injured in her hull, that she was compelled to go into Boston to refit. No portion of the history of war can the patriotic author write, or the patriotic reader peruse, with more exulting pleasure, than accounts of actions which manifest British bravery and conduct with inferior force triumphant on our peculiar element. The disabled ships of Britain went to New York to refit, while the French admiral, with the same intent, betook himself to Boston. When lord Howe's squadron was repaired, being now increased by the arrival of the *Monmouth*, one of admiral Byron's fleet, he, on the 30th of August, sailed to the bay of Boston, in pursuit of the enemy: but found the fleet so well secured by their position, under cover of land batteries, that he thought it prudent to retire. Returning to New York, he found more ships of Byron's squadron arrived, and the admiral himself daily expected. The naval force of England, on the admiral's station, being now undoubtedly superior to that of the enemy, lord Howe, having previously obtained leave to return to England on account of his health, resigned the command to admiral Gambier, and departed for Europe.

Attempt
on Rhode
Island.

THE Americans, trusting to the cooperation of the French fleet, had sent an army of ten thousand men, under general Sullivan, to Rhode Island, and commenced their operations. But the dispersion of the French fleet, and its final departure for Boston, daunted their spirits, induced many to desert, and left the remainder inferior to the British garrison. General Sullivan thereupon began his retreat, and departed in the night of the 28th of August several hours before the British perceived they were gone

Sir Robert Pigot, the English commander, followed on the 29th, attacked the rear division, and gained an advantage; but not so decisive as to prevent the Americans from continuing their route. Sir Henry Clinton, who was hastening by sea to relieve Rhode Island, arrived one day too late to intercept the retreating Americans. Although the detention of sir Henry Clinton probably saved Sullivan's corps from destruction, yet the miscarriage of the first enterprise, which they had undertaken in concert with France, not only disappointed, but offended the Americans; and though the officers and gentlemen endeavoured to dissemble every appearance of displeasure, the commonalty, less restrained by delicacy and policy, gave loose to their feelings. Indeed, scarcely two nations could be found in the civilized world, whose manners could be so reciprocally repulsive, as the sanctimonious austerity of the New Englanders, and the gay levity and dissipated libertinism of Frenchmen. Between the seamen of both countries, outrages and riots took place, that were like to have been attended with very serious consequences: the leading men of Boston, however, exerted themselves successfully to appease the tumults, and to give satisfaction to their new allies. General Clinton having returned towards New York, concerted several expeditions for destroying privateers. Major general Grey being detached to Buzzard bay in New England, landed on the banks of the Acushimet river, and executed his enterprise with such rapidity, that in less than one day he burned and destroyed all the ships in the river, amounting to more than seventy sail. The next day proceeding to Martha's Vineyard, a fertile and rich island, he destroyed several vessels, and carrying off a valuable booty in provisions, returned to New York. Lord Cornwallis soon afterwards undertook the direction of an expedition to Little Egg-harbour, on the coast of Jersey, which was also a general receptacle for privateers: one division of the detachment surprised and surrounded an American regiment of light horse, during the night, at Old Tapan on the North river; the greater number were killed, or taken prisoners. Captain Patrick Fergusson undertook to conduct the enterprise to Little Eggharbour; and by combined valour,

Partial
and des-
tached ex-
peditions.

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activity, and skill, surprised an American legion under count Pulaski. The success of this enterprise depending on celerity of execution, a great carnage unavoidably took place. The Americans poured out virulent invectives against what they termed the cruelty of the British; but it does not appear that any act was committed inconsistent with the laws of war. This was the last action of any importance performed by the British during this campaign in North America. The weather was that year extremely tempestuous on the American ocean; admiral Byron's fleet had been dispersed and separated by a storm on its passage from Europe. After being refitted at New York, he again went to sea with a view to block up the French fleet in Boston bay; but a second tempest drove him from that station. The count D'Estaing, taking the opportunity of the British admiral's absence, sailed to the West Indies.

D'Estaing
departs for
the West
Indies.

Further
proceed-
ings of the
commis-
sioners.

WHILE these operations were carrying on by land and sea, the commissioners continued in America, determined to leave nothing undone that might effect their purpose. Although hopeless of success from the first answer of the congress, they thought it necessary to reply; desiring an explanation of the sense in which the term independence was to be understood, and copies of the treaties with foreign powers, which had been referred to by the congress. Respecting the second preliminary, they declared the proposed removal of the troops inadmissible, as a force must necessarily be kept for defence against the common enemy, and for the protection of the loyalists. To this second letter of the commissioners no answer was given.

GOVERNOR JOHNSTONE being individually acquainted with several gentlemen of character and influence, tried to obtain a personal interview, in hopes of convincing them that it was the interest of the colonies to renew their amity with the mother country; for that purpose he requested admission to several gentlemen, but a decided negative was returned: he also wrote letters to different individuals, paragraphs of which were construed into an attempt to corrupt the integrity of the leaders. One of these is addressed to general Reed, and the following is the paragraph that underwent the interpretation. After an elo-

quent description of the evils flowing from the existing dissensions, and the blessings of reconciliation, the writer proceeds: "The man who can be instrumental in bringing us all to act once more in harmony, and unite together the various powers which this contest has drawn forth, will deserve more from the king and people, from patriotism, humanity, friendship, and all the tender ties that are affected by the quarrel, than were ever yet bestowed on human kind." On the 16th of June, in a private letter to Robert Morris, esq. formerly his friend, he says, "I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America, are incapable of being influenced by improper motives: but in all such transactions there is risk, and I think that whoever ventures should be secured; at the same time that honour and emolument shall naturally follow the fortune of those who have steered the vessel in the storm, and brought her safely to port. I think that Washington and the president have a right to every favour that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interests, and spare the miseries and devastations of war."

THE congress published the letters above mentioned by governor Johnstone, and attempted to construe them into an endeavour to bribe. The letters themselves express no such intention;^x they merely hold out a prospect of honour and reward for meritorious conduct. The congress, that they might inflame the passions of the people, issued a declaration, that it was incompatible with the honour of congress to hold any farther communication with governor Johnstone. The British commissioners, finding it was in vain to hope for the accomplishment of this great object, now confined their application to subordinate purposes. One of these was concerning the captured army of general Burgoyne. By one of the articles of capitulation it was stipulated, that the surrendering army should be at liberty to transport itself to Great Britain, on condition of not serving again in America during the war. Boston, the place from which it was to embark,

^x Mr. Belsham alleges, that Mr Johnstone employed a Mrs. Fergusson, as the agent in his proposed corruption. As he adduces no proofs to support his assertion, although he says *the fact was clearly ascertained*, an impartial historian cannot admit the charge on so very vague an evidence.

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was difficult of access to transports at that season of the year, which was the middle of winter; general Burgoyne applied for leave to march the troops to Rhode Island, that they might there embark. This request the congress not only refused, which was merely the denial of a solicited favour, but they declared a resolution of violating a solemn compact; they resolved to prohibit the embarkation of the Saratoga troops from any port whatsoever, until a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga should be properly notified by the court of Great Britain to congress; and entered upon their journals a resolution to that effect. This resolution was evidently a breach of the convention, as the now desired ratification was no part of that treaty. The commissioners, in a letter dated the 7th of August, remonstrated against the detention of the troops, contrary to the faith of treaties. Without answering this remonstrance, they entered into a charge against governor Johnstone, with whom they declared they could hold no communication. Governor Johnstone, to remove the pretended bar to intercourse, withdrew himself from the commission; and, in the public act by which he testified this determination, he very severely reprehended the conduct of the congress, and exposed the shallow pretext by which they endeavoured to cover their own breach of faith. These assertions respecting him, indeed, were never proved; and if they had been established, their authentication could not have justified the conduct of the Americans: even if Mr. Johnstone had attempted to bribe, the endeavour would not have justified a *breach of contract* with others not concerned in that endeavour. Governor Johnstone set off for Europe, leaving an able vindication of his conduct, in a letter addressed to his friend doctor Adam Fergusson. Meanwhile the remaining commissioners attempted by new arguments to show the congress the real views of France, and how little advantage they could reasonably expect from this connexion; they also sent again their former remonstrance, without the signature of governor Johnstone; and offered to ratify, in the king's name, all the conditions of the Saratoga convention, though such ratification was no part of its terms; but the congress perse-

vered in the breach of faith. The troops which had surrendered at Saratoga, having trusted to a convention stipulating their free return to Great Britain, were detained in captivity by the American congress violating a contract.

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THE commissioners sent no more letters to the congress: but published, on the 3d of October, a manifesto and proclamation, addressed to the members of the congress, and the members of the general assemblies or conventions of the several colonies. In this paper, they recapitulated the steps which they had taken for executing the objects of their commission; they enumerated their repeated endeavours to restore tranquillity and happiness to America; and stated the extent and beneficial tendency of the terms which they were empowered to offer: notwithstanding the obstructions they had encountered, they still declared their readiness to proceed in the execution of the powers contained in their commission, and to treat not only with deputies from all the colonies conjunctly, but with any provincial assembly or convention individually, at any time within the space of forty days from the date of their manifesto: next addressing themselves to all persons, ecclesiastical, military, civil, or private, and suggesting to the consideration of each of these classes, such motives as might be supposed to have the greatest influence, they adjured them not to let pass so favourable an opportunity of securing their liberties, future prosperity, and happiness, upon a permanent foundation: lastly, they appealed to the Americans collectively, in the following terms: "It will now become the colonies in general to call to mind their own solemn appeals to heaven in the beginning of this contest, that they took arms only for the redress of grievances; and that it was their wish, as well as their interest, to remain for ever connected with Great Britain. We again ask them, whether all their grievances, real or supposed, have not been amply and fully redressed? and we insist, that the offers we have made, leave nothing to be wished, in point of either immediate liberty or permanent security." The manifesto observed, that the policy as well as the benevolence of Great Britain checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people who were still considered as

They issue
a procla-
mation,

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but with-
out effect.They re-
turn to
England
The con-
gress pub-
lishes a
counter
manifesto.Hostilities
in Europe.

our fellow-subjects, and to desolate a country which was shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage. But when that country professed the unnatural design, not only of estranging her interests from ours, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest was changed, and the question was, how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of her enemy? Under such circumstances, the laws of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Great Britain, to render the accession of the American colonies as little beneficial as possible to France. The commissioners having remained until the forty days were expired, and not finding the proclamation likely to produce any conciliatory effect, set sail for Europe. The congress soon after published a counter manifesto, in which they affected to consider the proclamation of the commissioners as denouncing new schemes of vengeance and desolation, and declared their resolution to retaliate with the utmost severity.

HOSTILITIES in Europe were entirely maritime, and confined to the sea near the northwest coast of France. The French government, as soon as it had resolved on war, employed the most assiduous and vigorous preparations to equip a fleet sufficient to cope with England. In order to distract the attention of Great Britain, they pretended to threaten an invasion; and brought large bodies of troops to their northern coast. The British government ordered the militia to be embodied, and considerable numbers of soldiers to march to the vicinity of the coast: they directed camps to be formed at Winchester, Salisbury, and St. Edmondsbury, Warley common, and Coxheath; but they trusted the protection of the country chiefly to the fleet.

From the first appearance of probable hostilities between Great Britain and France so early as November 1776, lord Sandwich had cast his eyes on admiral Keppel as the most proper person to be intrusted with the important station. This gentleman had distinguished himself at the Havannah, being then second in command, and as highly esteemed and beloved in the navy. Having

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Admiral
Keppel
takes com-
mand o
the chan-
nel fleet.

conversed with Mr. Keppel, lord Sandwich found that, if the circumstances of the country required his efforts, his services would not be wanting: the admiral was indeed politically connected with opposition; but when war with France was become unavoidable, he, in consequence of his disposition before signified, was offered an appointment, which he accepted. In the beginning of June, a fleet of twenty ships of the line was ready for service. With these under his command, the admiral set sail on the 13th of that month, to protect our commerce, defend our coasts, and watch the motions of the enemy. The powers reposed in the admiral, were discretionary and unlimited. Sir Robert Harland and sir Hugh Palliser, two gentlemen high in his estimation and in the opinion of the public, were respectively appointed second and third in command. At this time war had not been declared, nor were reprisals ordered. The fleet proceeded to the bay of Biscay.

On the 17th of June, two French frigates were seen reconnoitring the British fleet: one of them, the *Licorne* of 32 guns, being overtaken by some of our ships, for some hours sailed with them; but manifesting an intention of departure, a shot was fired over her, when, to the astonishment of our fleet, she poured a broadside into the *America*, one of our ships of the line, and immediately struck her colours. To render this procedure the more extraordinary, lord Longford, captain of the *America*, and the French commander, were from their respective ships engaged in amicable conversation. Longford, instead of sinking the French frigate for her wanton attack, with cool magnanimity sent her under the stern of the *Victory*. The other ship, the *Belle Poole*, a large frigate, was closely pursued by the *Arethusa* of 32 guns, but not overtaken till at a great distance from the fleet. Captain Marshal, the British commander, informed the French captain, that he had orders from the admiral to conduct him to the fleet; but the Frenchman peremptorily refused to comply. Marshal fired across the ship; the answer was a broadside: a desperate engagement ensued; the *Arethusa* suffered much in her rigging, the *Belle Poole* in her hull, and great numbers were killed. The Frenchman perceiving the other, so much damaged as to be unable to pursue, embraced the

Capture of
the Li-
corne
French
frigate.

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Keppel re-
turns to
Ports-
mouth
for a rein-
forcement,sails in pur-
suit of the
enemy.

opportunity of retiring to the coast. This advantage, gained over superior numbers and weight of metal in the first conflict, much delighted the British sailors, and was reckoned ominous of future success. The next morning, the *Pallas*, another French frigate of 32 guns, approaching to reconnoitre the fleet, was pursued and taken, and with the *Licorne* sent into Plymouth. The French exclaimed against the detention of the two frigates, and pretended to assert that Britain was the aggressor, although France had before begun hostilities, by abetting the Americans in their revolt from their mother country. Although admiral Keppel seized two French frigates for improper conduct in the commanders, he abstained from their merchantmen, as letters of reprisal had not issued. This forbearance in our naval commander may perhaps have been right; but, as the hostile conduct of France justified hostilities from England, the more effectually they had been begun, the greater would be the prospect of ultimate success. The capture of their trading vessels, as in the commencement of the former war, would have distressed the enemy, by depriving them both of sailors and riches. Admiral Keppel being informed that the French fleet lying in Brest water amounted to thirty-two ships of the line, repaired to St. Helens for a reinforcement. The return of the admiral occasioned very great astonishment and consternation, not without a mixture of dissatisfaction; but ministers lost no time in augmenting his armament; lord Sandwich instantly set off for Portsmouth, and in a fortnight, ten ships of the line were added to Keppel's fleet. In the middle of July he set sail at the head of thirty British ships of the line, one of them the *Victory*, of the first rate, six of 90 guns, and the rest of the third rate. The fleet was formed into three divisions, the van commanded by sir Robert Harland, the rear by sir Hugh Palliser, and the centre by the admiral himself. Reprisals having been now issued, the French fleet had left Brest harbour on the 8th of July, commanded by count D'Orvilliers, and was cruising off the coast of Bretagne. On the 23d of July, in the afternoon, the fleets descried each other; the Bri-

tish ships being dispersed, a signal was thrown out for forming the line, but night came on before the ships were properly stationed. The following morning, the wind being westerly, it was discovered that the French had gained the weathergage; D'Orvilliers, however, though superior in number, still avoided battle. The British admiral, chasing to windward the three following days, endeavoured to bring on a battle, but in vain. On the 27th, a sudden squall came on, so very thick as to conceal the two fleets from the view of each other. When the weather became clear, it was found that the French fleet had fallen considerably to leeward, and was near the van of the British. Instantly admiral Keppel gave the signal for forming the line; an engagement began, as the fleets were passing each other in contrary directions. At this time, the Victory, and the other ships of the centre division were nearest to the enemy. Sir Robert Harland being to windward, was ready for immediate service; while sir Hugh Palliser was considerably to leeward with the rear, and out of the line. The French, who were now to leeward, had made an alteration in their movements, which seemed to indicate an intention of cutting off the rear division. The admiral, professing to entertain this apprehension, left the station in which the battle began, and sailed to leeward,^z until he was opposite to the enemy's van; while sir Robert Harland, by his orders, covered the rear. Keppel kept a signal constantly flying for Palliser to join the line, but that commander did not arrive. The admiral repeated the signal to Hugh Palliser to come to his station; but, before the order was obeyed, darkness prevented the renewal of the contest. The French admiral ranged his fleet so as to appear determined to fight the next morning; but in the night they quitted their station, leaving three frigates with lights at proper intervals, to appear to the British the leading ships of their three divisions. The next morning the French fleet was at so great a distance, that the admiral did not think it expedient to renew the pursuit; it would, he alleged, be impossible to overtake them, and his

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Describes
the French
fleet off
Ushant.

Battle of
the 27th of
July,

indecisive.

The
French
fleet re-
tires dur-
ing the
night.

^z This evolution was afterwards the foundation of one of the principal charges against admiral Keppel; it being represented as wearing the appearance of flight, and thus bringing disgrace on the British flag.

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Apprehen-
sive of a
lee shore,
Keppel
forbears
pursuit.

own ships would be exposed to danger from a lee shore: he therefore desisted from the attempt, and returned to Plymouth.

THOUGH this battle by no means answered the expectations that British experience and nautical valour and skill naturally and reasonably formed, from a conflict between thirty of our ships of the line, and thirty-two of the French, it effected one very important purpose; the French fleet being obliged to go to port to refit, several British fleets of merchantmen from the East and West Indies and the Mediterranean arrived in safety. Impartial examiners very easily perceived that there was a want of concert in the disposition of the fleet on the day of battle. Admiral Keppel, in his letter to the admiralty, expressed himself, in general terms, satisfied with the conduct of officers and men; it, however, soon appeared that he was much dissatisfied with the procedure of Palliser.

Captures
by frigates
and priva-
teers.

BOTH the French and English fleets went again to sea in the month of August, but did not again meet during this campaign. Considerable captures were made by frigates and privateers on both sides, but the balance of prizes was greatly in favour of Britain. Two Liverpool privateers took a French homeward bound East India-man, estimated at 320,000*l.*; and captain Dawson of the *Mentor* took another, valued at 240,000*l.*

Balance
favourable
to England.Depreda-
tions by
Paul
Jones;

THE American privateers, trusting to the alliance with France, came this year to the coast of Europe, and committed various depredations. The most daring commander of these ships was the noted adventurer Paul Jones. This person had been gardener to the earl of Selkirk, at a seat near Kirkudbright on the southwest coast of Scotland. Leaving his employment abruptly, on account of some umbrage which he had conceived against the family, he had betaken himself to sea, and by professional skill, together with intrepid boldness, arrived at the appointment which he then held. Jones, directing his efforts against the coasts with which he was best acquainted, landed at Whitehaven in Cumberland, and set fire to a ship in the harbour, with the intention of burning the town, but was driven away by the exertions of the inhabitants. From thence he proceeded over Solway

Frith to the seat of lord Selkirk, and pillaged the house of all the plate, jewels, and other valuable effects; but though he greatly alarmed the lady and family (his lordship being in London), no violence was offered to any individual.

ADMIRALS KEPPEL and Palliser had each numerous partisans; the difference between them, therefore, spread itself through the fleet, the navy, and kingdom. Keppel's supporters alleged, that if Palliser had obeyed the signal, the action must have been general, and the consequence a complete victory to Britain. Palliser's friends asserted, that the admiral lost the moment of victory, when, instead of bearing forward on the enemy with his full force, he moved to leeward, lost the afternoon by that movement, and thus allowed the enemy to escape. To this principal imputation of Mr. Palliser against Mr. Keppel, several other charges were added, that he had formed his line negligently; that he had not made proper dispositions for covering the rear division; that he might have renewed the battle on that afternoon; that the next morning the French fleet was not at so great a distance as to render pursuit unavailing; and that, in short, the admiral had not done his duty.

WHETHER Mr. Palliser's censure on Mr. Keppel was right or wrong, its ground was his conduct on the 27th and 28th of July, 1778. After that time, the vice-admiral again went to sea under the admiral; delivered him a letter, testifying his majesty's approbation of his conduct; corresponded with him in terms of friendship, and in his letters expressed a very high opinion of his superior disinterestedness and zeal for the service.^z This conduct, however, of Mr. Palliser relates only to his sincerity and consistency, but is totally irrelative to the truth or falsehood of the charges. After the fleet returned to harbour for the winter, admiral Keppel was severely censured by ministerial publications, and admiral Palliser by writings favourable to opposition. In a newspaper of the latter class an anonymous letter was inserted, strongly reprehending sir Hugh Palliser. The vice-admiral, having read this production, applied to Keppel to justify his con-

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he plunders the seat of lord Selkirk. Criminal and recrimination of Keppel and Palliser.

^z See Proceedings of the court martial on admiral Keppel.

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duct, and required him for that purpose to sign a statement, which not only would have exculpated Palliser, but criminated himself. The admiral having refused to comply, Palliser published in one of the morning papers a long and particular detail of the action of the 27th of July, together with an introductory letter signed with his name. The performance teemed with censure against the conduct of the commander in chief. After indignant remarks and severe recrimination from Keppel, and reciprocal repetition of invective, the trials of both were ordered.

They are
respectively
tried
and acquitted.

ADMIRAL KEPPEL was first tried: the charge consisted of five articles, detailing the objects already narrated. After it had continued from the 7th of January 1779, until the 11th of February, the court not only acquitted the admiral, but declared the charges false, slanderous, and malicious. When the news of the sentence reached London, very general illuminations, instigated by political partisans, took place for two successive nights. The populace was inflamed by a notion very industriously disseminated, that the proceedings against admiral Keppel were at the instance of ministry, in order to screen their own misconduct in furnishing him with an inadequate force. Under this impression the mob committed many outrages on the houses of lord Sandwich, and other ministers.

PALLISER, soon after the acquittal of Keppel, demanded a court martial on himself. The charge against him was not specific, but a general assertion of nonperformance of duty; and after a trial which lasted from the 12th of April till the 5th of May, he was acquitted.

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State of public sentiment and opinion at the meeting of parliament.—The nation is disposed to strenuous exertion.—The king's speech intimates dissatisfaction with the events of the campaign.—Strictures of opposition on the employment of Indian savages—appeal to the bishops thereon.—The dispute between Keppel and Palliser is introduced into parliament.—Mr. Fox makes a motion for censuring lord Sandwich—which is negatived.—Disputes arise in the navy between the partisans of the respective admirals.—Mr. Fox's motion for the removal of lord Sandwich.—Inquiry into the conduct of generals Burgoyne and Howe, and admiral lord Howe.—The evidence is at first favourable to sir William Howe.—Testimony of general Robertson and Mr. Galloway unfavourable.—Inquiry abruptly abandoned.—Inquiry into the conduct of Burgoyne—clears his character from specific false aspersions.—Riots in Scotland from enthusiastic zeal against popery—imputed by Mr. Burke to the supineness of ministers.—Rupture with Spain.—Spain evidently the aggressor.—Resolutions and measures of parliament thereon.—Session rises.

THE refusal of the Americans to accept of the proffered terms, their alliance with our ancient enemy, and their incitement of that enemy to join them in effort for the reduction of this country, now estranged from their cause many Britons, who formerly favoured them, and reprobated the conduct of administration. Impartial patriots reasoned, that deficient as ministers might be in the foresight, wisdom and vigour requisite at so arduous a conjuncture, reproach and invective were not the means of enabling them to promote the national advantage; that we were now in a state of difficulty and danger, in which retrospection of causes was much less a subject of inquiry, than the means of extrication. Strenuous exertion was now

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The nation is disposed to strenuous exertion.

The king's speech intimates dissatisfaction with the events of the campaign.

generally deemed the only sure way of delivering us from war, and enforcing an honourable peace. To promote vigorous efforts, the most effectual means was unanimity. From these considerations, though the number of those who venerated the ability of ministers by no means increased, yet a much greater majority of the nation than before was now disposed to second their efforts.

PARLIAMENT met on the 25th of November, 1778. His majesty's speech very clearly, concisely, and justly described the conduct of France: "In the time of profound peace (said the king), without pretence of provocation or colour of complaint, the court of France hath not forborne to disturb the public tranquillity, in violation of the faith of treaties and the general rights of sovereigns; at first, by the clandestine supply of arms and other aid to my revolted subjects in North America; afterwards, by avowing openly their support, and entering into formal engagements with the leaders of the rebellion; and, at length, by committing open hostilities and depredations on my faithful subjects, and by an actual invasion of my dominions in America and the West Indies." His majesty did not express himself satisfied with the success of the late campaign, but trusted to future efforts.

OPPOSITION, considering the speech as the production not of the king but of the minister, contended, that in asserting the success had not been proportioned to our efforts, it declared a falsehood. The advantages gained were far greater than could be expected from the inferiority of our fleets, and the tardiness of our preparations. The speech regretted the failure of conciliatory measures. These were themselves humiliating to England, and unsatisfying to America: but, notwithstanding its defects and absurdities, the adoption of that scheme could not be said to be wholly useless; it had destroyed every fallacious argument by which ministers had beguiled the nation into the fatal contest with America, for it surrendered all its professed objects. The supporters of ministry justified the past conduct of the war, and the preparation and distribution of the armaments that were employed in the summer. By delaying the departure of admiral Byron,

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D'Estaing was prevented from joining the Brest fleet, and giving France a decided superiority in the channel. The evacuation of Philadelphia was also, they asserted, a measure of wise policy, from the accession of France to the war : New York was much more central, nearer to the coast, and fitter for sending reinforcements to the West India islands, or wherever they might be wanted. Opposition admitted the propriety of evacuating Philadelphia, but contended that the reasons in which it was founded, demonstrated the folly of the whole system. The army in America was reduced to this alternative, either by retaining its acquisitions to divide and debilitate its own strength, or else to stand exposed to disgrace and mortification, and by retracing its steps, to show the inutility of all its labours. No man could expect to conquer a continent by possessing a single town ; therefore, while the nation persisted in carrying on an offensive war in America, whether our army advanced, retreated, or stood still, the effect would be the same, a fruitless, expensive, and cruel, because unnecessary, war. The amendment was rejected by a great majority. Patriotism and wisdom might before have dictated opposition to the ministerial measures respecting America, while there were hopes that by combating the plans of government they might produce a conciliatory change : now, however, the colonists were avowed enemies, and were engaged in a hostile confederacy against Britain ; and there was no alternative but victory or submission. If ministry might be justly charged with having brought us, by their ignorance and want of political abilities, into so bloody and expensive a war, opposition did not employ the most efficacious means for procuring a safe and honourable peace. Perpetual invectives against administration were far from tending to depress the enemy, or strengthen the country. Common sense could never consider a regular and uniform system of obstruction to his majesty's councils, as the most effectual mode of promoting the success of his arms.

THE chief object of opposition during this session, was to censure the conduct of the war, and to impute all real or alleged miscarriages to the incapacity and infatuation of ministers. On the 4th of December, a motion

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of opposi-
tion on the
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ment of
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was made for an address to his majesty concerning the late manifesto of the commissioners, to declare the displeasure of parliament at certain passages of the proclamation, as totally unauthorized by the act of the legislature for appointing these commissioners, and in themselves utterly inconsistent with the humanity and generous courage which at all times distinguished the British nation, subversive of the maxims which have been established among christian and civilized communities, derogatory from the dignity of the crown of this realm, and tending to debase the spirit and to subvert the discipline of his majesty's armies. The supporters of the motion interpreted the passages in question in nearly the same manner as the Americans professed to have done, and considered them as replete with denunciations of the most savage barbarity. On this assumption their arguments proceeded, and speakers expatiated on the wickedness and madness of the new kind of warfare, which converted British soldiers into butchers, assassins, and incendiaries, and proposed for the model of civilized Britons the practices of Indian savages. Contrary, they alleged, as the threatened mode of carrying on war was to humanity, it was no less inimical to sound policy, as the colonists could retaliate on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland; and various parts of his majesty's dominions must, by their exposed situation, suffer the most dreadful cruelties from retaliation: on these grounds, they proposed to request that it should be disavowed by his majesty.

To this deduction of consequences, ministers replied, by denying the principle; the proclamation, they contended, denounced no new species of war, no kind of hostilities dissimilar to those which have been usually carried on between belligerent nations in every part of the civilized world. In the former part of the American war, Britain had considered the colonists not as enemies, but as subjects partly rebellious from disposition, but chiefly misled by mischievous counsel; it had therefore been their wish to instruct and persuade, as well as to compel: but now the provincials had thrown themselves into the arms of French enemies, and were henceforth to be treated like any

other foes, so as most speedily and effectually to annoy and weaken the hostile cause. This was the amount of the reprehended portion of the manifesto, such was the intention of its framers, such the meaning which its expressions plainly and explicitly conveyed. They could not therefore consent to address his majesty, that he might disavow intimations which, instead of censure, deserved the highest approbation. After a very hard contest between the censurers and supporters of this act of the commissioners, an occurrence took place, which appeared to give the former a considerable advantage. Governor Johnstone speaking on the subject, exhibited the irritation of violent passion, much more than the sound vigorous reasoning by which his eloquence was generally distinguished; he declared the manifesto to have meant a desolating war, and justified it in that view as not only right but necessary. Opposition contended, that this avowal by one who had been a commissioner, proved their assertion. Ministers, however, adhered to their rejection of the interpretation. In discussing this question, general Howe, after reprobating the alleged plan of war, deviated from the question, to introduce a charge against the secretary, concerning his conduct to the generals who commanded in America. To the maladministration of Germaine, Howe imputed his own request to resign his employment, and strongly urged the institution of a parliamentary inquiry, in order that the conduct both of the commanders and minister should be fully examined, justice done on all sides, and the nation acquainted with the true cause of that failure of success which it had hitherto experienced. The secretary, after expressing his astonishment at the accusation, and vindicating his conduct, declared, that he certainly should not object to an inquiry when regularly proposed, as he was confident it must terminate to his honour. Returning from irrelevant topics to the subject at issue, the house was called for a vote, and a motion was negatived by a majority of two hundred and nine to two hundred and twenty-two.

WHEN the proclamation was discussed in the house of peers, an appeal was made to the bench of bishops, to exert that charity, humanity, and abhorrence of blood and cru-

Appeal to
the bishops
thereon.

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elty, which were the leading tenets and distinguishing characteristics of christianity, upon a subject which not only came directly within their cognisance, but in which they seemed bound by their character to exert the peculiar and most exalted principles of their religion, in preventing the wanton butchery and destruction of mankind. Their interference was required to prevent the destruction, and spare the blood, not only of men and christians, but of Englishmen and protestants, like themselves; to crush in the outset an abominable system of warfare, which in its progress and consequences would bring desolation and ruin on their own flocks. The legal powers with which they had been invested by the constitution for such pious purposes, would be found, in the present instance, fully equal to the duty and emergency. They were the moderators, ordained by the wisdom of the constitution, to check the rage, restrain the passions, and control the violence of temporal men. Their simple votes upon this occasion would at once fully express their detestation of the inhuman system; and, joined with those of the secular lords who held the same principles, would cure its effects. The bishops were very far from contesting that it was incumbent on them to exert their abilities and influence for moderating the passions of men, and preventing the wanton effusion of christian blood; but, as the lords in opposition had not proved that efforts against revolted subjects, who were leagued with inveterate enemies, were wanton, and they thought the annoyance of such foes necessary for self-defence, they did not consider themselves as justified in censuring the manifesto.^a

CENSURE of ministry had constituted a considerable part of the proceedings of opposition in the former years of our dispute with the colonies; but the reprehension had been combined with wise legislative propositions for removing the evils of which they complained. During the present session, reproach of administration constituted

^a Mr. Belsham, uniformly desirous of throwing out indirect or direct charges against our ecclesiastical establishment, in mentioning a protest that was entered on this occasion, says, "it is painful to remark, that the name of one bishop only, the venerable Shipley of St. Asaph, is to be found in the long and illustrious train of signatures annexed to this memorable protest." This censure of our prelates, Mr. Belsham supports by no proof; it rests entirely upon his own authority.

nearly the sole conduct by which they professed to discharge their duty, as senators deliberating for the good of their country. Every commander whose success had not answered the expectations formed from the means with which he was supplied, imputed his miscarriages to ministry ; and, as soon as he made that imputation, was supported by opposition with an eagerness that greatly outstripped the evidence. On the 28th of December, a debate arose in the house of commons, on a proposed vote of seventy thousand seamen for the service of the ensuing year. During the discussion, it was observed by opposition, that as very different representations had been given of the naval proceedings of admiral Keppel's fleet on the 27th and 28th of July, an inquiry ought to be instituted for ascertaining the truth. Preliminary to such investigation, it was proposed, that as both officers, being members of the house, were then present, one or both of them should afford some satisfaction on the subject. Admiral Keppel having risen in compliance with this request, made a speech, of which, though some parts were sufficiently intelligible, there were others by no means explicit, and of which the exact import could not well be apprehended from the expressions themselves, though the tendency and intent might be gathered from various circumstances. He affirmed, that on the occasion in question, he had done his utmost against the enemy ; the glory of the British flag had not been tarnished in his hands, and were he again in the same situation, he should act in the same manner ; but the oldest and most experienced naval officers would discover something in every engagement with which they were before unacquainted, and he acknowledged, that day had presented to him something new. He impeached no man (he said) of a neglect of duty, because he was satisfied the officer who had been alluded to had manifested no want of courage, which was the quality most essential to a British seaman.^b

The dispute between Keppel and Palliser is introduced into parliament.

^b The reader must here see very indefinite expressions, and reasoning by no means conclusive. What the alleged novelty that had occurred in the engagement was, he did not explain, though, without great likelihood of mistake, common sagacity might conjecture what meaning he intended to convey. *He impeached no man of neglect of duty*, BECAUSE the officer alluded to *manifested no want of courage*. Though courage be, as he observed, the most essential quality of a seaman, yet it is not his only duty, and there might

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All his direct complaints or animadversions were limited to an anonymous letter imputed to that gentleman, and another letter avowed and signed by him, and both published in a newspaper. In the subsequent part of his speech, complaining of the abuse to which he had been exposed in diurnal publications, he said he did not charge ministers with being the authors or promoters of the invectives against him ; they, on the contrary, seemed to be his friends, and caressed and smiled upon him : or if any ministers were capable of vilifying and secretly aspersing him, and endeavouring to cut his throat behind his back, *he did not think they were then near him.*^c Sir Hugh Palliser charged the admiral with dark and indirect insinuations, called on him to state his charges, justified his own conduct, and expressed his wish for a public inquiry ; the institution and result of which I have already narrated as far as concerned the two admirals. Opposition in parliament condemned the admiralty for granting a court martial at the instance of Palliser. They should [they said] have acted as moderators upon this occasion, given passion time to cool, and interposed their influence in healing the differences between two brave and valuable officers, at a time when their services were so much wanted : instead of which they blew up the flame, by precipitately receiving a rash, hasty, and passionate accusation ; and thereby drawing on the fatal dissensions in the naval service, and the numerous evils to the public, which they had themselves declared must be inevitable consequences of such a trial. The commissioners of the admiralty strenuously insisted their constitution to be such, that in all matters of accusation they were obliged to act ministerially, they had no judicial power ; that, when a complaint was preferred, they were, as a matter of course and in discharge of their office, not only compelled to receive it, but to give the necessary direction for the trial.

be grounds of impeachment against an officer who had exerted courage. In fact, admiral Keppel does not disavow the existence of other grounds : but the exclusive admission of that quality tends by a natural construction to insinuate a denial, or, at least, a doubt of the performance of other necessary duties by the individual to whom he alluded.

^c Lord Sandwich, first lord of the admiralty, and a member of the other house, being in anti-ministerial works represented as both politically and personally inimical to admiral Keppel, was understood to be meant by this insinuation.

THE vice-admiral had preferred an accusation consisting of five separate articles, or charges, properly drawn up, and specifically pointed. What line of conduct then could the admiralty board pursue? They must either prejudge the truth of those charges, or admit them to be such as were fit to be sent to the consideration of a court martial. The first they neither could, nor dared to do, being totally ignorant of their truth or falsehood; and with the second they were compelled to comply, because the matter allowed no other alternative. Opposition insisted that the admiralty was not only endued with discretionary powers competent to the purpose, but that the exercise of these was one of their great and principal duties, and among the most useful purposes of their institution. They represented their omission of so important a duty on the present occasion as highly culpable; but, in endeavouring to ascertain the powers of the admiralty, they argued more from their own conception of expediency, than from either statute or usage. The restrictions (they said) by which they pretended to be bound, would establish a principle that must destroy all naval service, and leave every superior officer at the mercy of his inferior. If the whole fleet of England were upon the point of sailing on the most sudden and critical emergency, whether for our immediate defence against invasion, or for the preservation of the most valuable foreign interest, according to this doctrine every petty officer, through folly, malice, or treachery, might prevent the whole design and operation, only by laying some charge against the commander in chief, which would necessarily detain all the principal officers, either as witnesses or judges. From this extraneous discussion, returning to the subject at issue, the house by the previous question dismissed the motion.

DURING the recess of parliament the admiral's trial began; and on his acquittal, a motion was made in the house of commons, that the thanks of the house should be given to the honourable Augustus Keppel for his distinguished courage, conduct, and ability, in defending the kingdom in the course of the last summer effectually protecting its trade, and more particularly for his having gloriously upheld the honour of the British flag on the 27th

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and 28th of July : the proposition was adopted, there being only one dissentient voice. The thanks of the lords, in nearly the same terms, were voted in four days after, with every external appearance of the most perfect unanimity. The impartial reader may, perhaps, find a difficulty in comprehending what the acts of Keppel were on the 27th and 28th of July, which drew forth from parliament such testimonies of gratitude ; and what essential service the chief naval commander on that memorable occasion rendered to his country. It was very evident that ministers did not conceive such an opinion of his public conduct, as their assent to the vote of thanks might indicate ; but as the tide of popularity ran so high in his favour, they did not think it prudent to go against the current. This compliance with a proposition of their adversaries, manifestly contrary to their own judgment, was very frequent in lord North's administration ; and appeared to arise from a desire of deprecating part of the censure which they so often experienced : an attempt, however, by unjust and unnecessary concessions to prevent obloquy, was an expedient of weakness and timidity, and demonstrated the absence of that firmness with which conscious wisdom and rectitude pursue their purposes. The admiralty informed Keppel, that in consequence of his acquittal he was required to resume his command ; but though he complied with the requisition yet the terms in which it was expressed manifesting no approbation of his conduct, he soon after asked and received his majesty's leave to resign.

Mr. Fox
makes a
motion for
censuring
lord Sand-
wich.

MR. Fox followed the acquittal of his friend and the thanks of the houses, by a motion for censuring lord Sandwich, intended (he said) as a prelude to another for his removal from office. The alleged ground of censure was, the inadequacy of the force that had been furnished to Keppel : when he sailed with twenty ships of the line, there were thirty sail of the line in Brest water fit for service. Either ministers did or did not know that fact ; if they knew it, it was an act of the highest criminality to commit the fate of this country to so great a disparity of force : on the other hand, if the first lord of the admiralty was ignorant of the state of the French navy it was an ignorance totally inconsistent with the performance of his offi-

cial duty. Ministers answered, that there was no evidence of the fact on which this charge was grounded ; it appeared from the papers of the captured *Licorne*, that the alleged number was then in a state of preparation, but not that they were actually equipped : and in the conduct of the French it appeared, that they were not then ready for sea : since, though they knew that an English fleet of twenty ships of the line were at sea, they did not leave harbour till a fortnight after. The motion was rejected by a majority of 204 to 170, a difference much smaller than on any question that had occurred respecting the war. Mr. Fox made a second attack, which was directed against the whole of lord Sandwich's administration : stating the objects which ought to have been considered by the naval minister, the expense incurred, and the armament provided, he endeavoured to prove that the expense was sufficient for the attainment of all the objects, but that the force prepared was totally inadequate ; on these grounds he moved a vote of censure. Admirals lord Howe and Keppel, by professional statements, and arguments derived from these, supported Mr. Fox's positions. Ministers answered, that the allegations of their opponents were founded in assumptions not supported by facts, and that they could not join in a vote of censure for unsubstantiated charges ; on a division, the motion was rejected by a majority of two hundred and forty-six to one hundred and seventy-four.

which is
negatived.

GREAT dissensions, originating in the dispute between Keppel and Palliser, were now prevalent in the navy, and very serious apprehensions were entertained of their consequences. A declaration of admiral Keppel in the last debate, that he would not accept of any command under the present ministry, powerfully tended to fan the flame. Several officers of high rank and character immediately quitted the service, or declared they could not act under the present system. The political parties reciprocally accused each other with having caused these discords.

Dispute
arises in
the navy
between
the parti-
sans of the
respective
admirals.

SIR PHILIP JENNINGS CLERK, encouraged by the success which his bill for the exclusion of contractors the preceding session obtained in the house of commons, attempted its revival ; but he soon found that a great change of opinion had taken place. It was rejected by a majority

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of 165 to 124. On the 10th of March, Mr. Frederic Montague proposed a bill for granting farther relief to protestant dissenting ministers and schoolmasters. The enlightened liberality of the age had, it was said, diminished the legal restrictions upon the Roman catholics, therefore the protestant ministers had a fair claim to partake of legislative indulgence. The extent and bounds of toleration depend entirely on expediency, founded in the nature of the opinions professed, and their practical tendency. In the conduct of the class whose relief was now sought, no objection of either justice or policy could be adduced to prevent it from being granted. In the present state of loss, calamity, and danger, it was necessary to unite the interests and affections of all our countrymen, and to concentrate into one mass all the remaining strength of the empire. Two classes of senators had, as we have seen, opposed former applications of dissenters: the first, from high church doctrines; the second, from views of political expediency. In the present instance, the second class, however, was favourable to the bill, which, though violently opposed by members of the first, passed both houses by great majorities, and received the royal assent. The chief object of this session continued to be the discussion of executorial conduct. Admiral Pigot, brother of lord Pigot, late governor of Madras, exhibited an historical detail of the object of his late brother's appointment, his conduct, the treatment which he experienced from the company's servants resisting his execution of the orders of their masters, his sufferings, and consequent death. After calling witnesses to establish his proceedings, he moved an address to his majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to give directions to his attorney general to prosecute George Stratton, Henry Brooke, Charles Floyer, and George Mackay, esquires, for ordering the governor and commander in chief, George lord Pigot, to be arrested and confined under a military force; they being returned to England, and now within the jurisdiction of his majesty's courts of Westminster hall. Mr. Stratton, being a member of parliament, and present at this very time, entered into a defence and vindication of his own conduct and that of his colleagues, in which he imputed their pro-

ceedings to a necessity arising from the violent and arbitrary acts of lord Pigot ; but his arguments made so little impression on the house, that the resolutions were immediately adopted without one dissenting voice. The prosecution took place ; each was sentenced to pay a fine of 1000*l.* a very inconsiderable sum to men of immense fortunes, and which could hardly operate as a punishment.

MR. FOX, on the 10th of April, moved an address to the throne for the dismissal of lord Sandwich from his majesty's service, for misconduct in office. The alleged grounds were the same collectively which had before separately been rejected by the house ; Mr. Fox, however, with his usual ingenuity, endeavoured to show that the case was different, between a motion for censure and for removal : the former were judicial inquiries, the present was a deliberative question of expediency. A motion for censure required, in point of justice, a specification and certainty of the offences imputed ; a motion for dismissal from employment ought to be adopted, if it was probable that the business of the employer would be better performed by another. The whole of the subject proposed might be proved in a few short questions and answers. Was lord Sandwich equal to the performance of his official duties, with safety and honour to the nation ? Has he hitherto done so ? What reason is there for supposing that he who has failed in his past duties, shall act more ably for the future ? The majority of members did not admit Mr. Fox to have established the alleged unfitness of lord Sandwich, and therefore voted against his removal.

Mr. Fox's motion for the removal of lord Sandwich.

MUCH censure had been thrown out against general Howe, especially in writings alleged to be patronized by ministers ; and it was confidently and vehemently asserted, that, if his conduct had been wise and vigorous, he might have repeatedly terminated the war. Both the Howes strongly urged an inquiry, as the sure means of vindicating their character. Lord North replied, that as government had advanced no charge against the noble brothers, no vindication was necessary, and that ministers had no share in the invectives ; but though he did not approve of an inquiry, he would not oppose its institution, and readily agreed to the production of the papers which were wanted

Inquiry into the conduct of generals Burgoyne and Howe, and admiral lord Howe.

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The evidence at first favourable to sir William Howe.

for carrying it into effect. In these was included the whole correspondence between the ministers and commanders in America, from Howe's arrival at Boston in 1775, to his departure from Philadelphia in 1778; also the accounts, returns, and, other documents, tending to show the state of the army at different periods; the real movements and operations, as well as the different plans of action, which had been proposed, discussed, or concerted by the ministers and generals. Ministers apprehending that their own counsels, and not the conduct of the commanders was the real object of the scrutiny, proposed that the examination of witnesses should be confined to military subjects: and on the 6th of May, lord Cornwallis, major general Grey, sir Andrew Snape Hammond, major Montresor, chief engineer, and sir George Osborne, were examined. The result of their evidence was, that the force sent to America was at no time equal to the subjugation of the colonies; that the difficulty chiefly arose from the almost unanimous hostility of the people to the British government, and the natural obstructions of the country, so abounding in woods, rivers, hills, and defiles. Their evidence descending to accounts of particular actions, from which the chief censure of the general had arisen, tended to justify his conduct. General Howe himself endeavoured to prove, that he had uniformly stated to the American minister the utter impossibility of reducing America without a much greater force; that he had accompanied his proposed plan for the campaign of 1777, with a requisition of a reinforcement of twenty thousand men, or at the least fifteen thousand, as indispensably necessary; that the minister had uniformly supposed the number of loyalists to be much greater than it really was; trusting to their cooperation, he could not be convinced that so great a reinforcement was wanted, and therefore had not sent a fifth part of the number. Concerning the northern expedition, no concert had been proposed between him and the general of that army, nor did he hear any support was expected from him, until a letter from the secretary, which reached him in the Chesapeake, expressed a hope that he might be able to cooperate with Burgoyne. Ministers perceiving that the

evidence adduced was not only intended, but directed to the crimination of themselves, much more than an inquiry into the conduct of the general, proposed to call witnesses on the other side. The chief evidences were major general Robertson, deputy governor of New York, and Mr. Joseph Galloway, an American lawyer, who, after having been a member of the first congress, joined the British army. The testimony of Mr. Robertson rather expressed general disapprobation of sir William Howe's conduct, than advanced particular charges: Mr. Galloway's accusations, specific and direct, included the various topics of military error or misconduct which had been so repeatedly alleged against the general. But, without questioning the veracity of Mr. Galloway, his competency may be doubted: he was chiefly stating, not facts, but opinions, of which the subject was a detailed series of military operations; and he being no military man, the less authority was due to his judgment. Mr. Galloway made one very extraordinary assertion, that four-fifths of the Americans were zealously attached to the British government; if the proportion of loyalists had been really so great, they could have easily overpowered the revolters, without the assistance of one British soldier: so exaggerated an account, manifesting at least glaringly inaccurate observation, very much weakened the credibility of his assertions. Sir William Howe requested leave to call witnesses to controvert Mr. Galloway's asseverations: ministers objected to this mode, as productive of too much delay; he was, however, allowed to cross-examine this witness. A day being fixed for that purpose, and sir William not having attended at the appointed hour, the committee was suddenly dissolved, and the question at issue was left undecided. Opposition had eagerly demanded and prosecuted an inquiry, while the testimony in exculpating the commander tended to criminate ministry; but when the evidence took a different turn, their ardour manifestly subsided. Respecting general Howe, the principal witnesses in his favour were much more competent than the principal witnesses against him: lord Cornwallis and general Grey, military men, spoke concerning actions in which they were themselves engaged; Mr. Galloway, not a military man, spoke from

Testimony of general Robertson and Mr. Galloway unfavourable.

The inquiry is abruptly abandoned.

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hearsay. It must, however, be observed, that in inquiries concerning *what might have been done*, testimony is necessarily inference, not the result of recollection and veracity, but also of opinion and conjecture. The judgment of the wisest men, concerning subjects in which they are peculiarly skilled, may be warped by their affections. Many other professional men, having considered in detail the force and opportunities of General Howe, drew a totally different conclusion.

WHATEVER estimate the impartial reader may have formed of the merit of general Howe's exertions, he must immediately perceive, that the inquiries proved ministers to have continued in that state of misinformation and ignorance respecting the sentiments of the Americans, in which their fatal plans and measures originated ; and also, that they did not send to America the force which the general required.^d Ministers, by patronising Mr. Galloway, and other accusers of the late commander, demonstrated themselves disposed to promote an opinion of his culpability. If they conceived the late commander not to have discharged his duty, ministers, in not ordering a court martial to establish the imputed misconduct, neglected their duties to their king and country ; if they thought him innocent, it was mean and illiberal in them to favour and pension his revilers :^e if he was guilty, they acted weakly and timidly in not bringing forward the proofs. Lord North and his colleagues, however, are exempted from one charge, often adduced against the counsellors who have appointed a commander in chief to conduct an expedition that proves unsuccessful. His military reputation *at the time he received* this last commission, justified the appointment ; though there might be persons whose expectations were not fulfilled by general Howe's campaigns, none could with justice at the outset

^d Our immortal war minister, secretary Pitt, after he planned an expedition, and selected an officer to conduct it, immediately asked him, what force he would deem necessary ? On being informed, he always ordered a still stronger armament ; but different, indeed was the war minister of 1759, from the war minister of 1777.

^e Mr. Galloway, and several others of inferior note, who inveighed against general Howe, received pensions. Galloway's evidence was published in a pamphlet, and circulated with great industry by the friends of administration.

have affirmed that he was a man whose talents and character did not justify reasonable expectations of success.

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GENERAL BURGOYNE also insisted on an inquiry into his conduct. On his return from America the former year, he had applied for a court martial : which was refused him, on the ground that while he was prisoner his preceding conduct was not cognisable by any tribunal in this country. He had been refused admittance to the sovereign, and complained loudly of the court and ministry ; he repeatedly solicited a parliamentary investigation, but Germaine had declared that his request could not be granted until after a military scrutiny, which he affirmed to be at that time impracticable ; and when an inquiry was allowed to general Howe, Burgoyne having resumed his solicitation, his requisition was at last agreed to. The principal witnesses were, sir Guy Carleton, the earl of Balcarras, captain Money, the earl of Harrington, major Forbes, captain Bloomfield and colonel Kingston. The evidence tended to overthrow some severe charges and censures which had been insinuated or directed against Burgoyne's conduct, and particularly detected two falsehoods then very commonly believed : first, that general Philips, the evening before the convention of Saratoga, offered to force his way, with a specified part of the army, from Saratoga back to Ticonderago : secondly, that the late gallant Fraser had expressed the utmost disapprobation of the measure of passing the Hudson river. The question, however, was undecided, whether his orders for proceeding to Albany were peremptory or conditional : some doubts were also left, respecting both the design and the mode of conducting the expedition to Bennington. These inquisitorial proceedings occupied parliament during the greater part of the session.

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Inquiry into the conduct of Burgoyne ;

cleared his character from specific false aspersions.

RIOTS, which had arisen in Scotland from groundless apprehensions concerning popery, were, by the ingenuity of opposition, made subjects of accusation against ministry. The Roman catholic bill, that passed during the preceding session, excited great alarms in North Britain, as it was supposed to be the intention of parliament to extend the relief to the Scottish catholics. When the law was enacted in 1778, the general assembly of the church of Scotland

Riots in Scotland from enthusiastic zeal against popery,

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happened to be sitting. The well intended but unadvised zeal of some members of that respectable body, proposed for clerical discussion the late act, and made a motion for petitioning the legislature not to extend the bill or any of its provisions to Scotland, and supported the proposition by detailing the common arguments against popery. Mr. Dundas, a lay member of the assembly, showed that the law repealed in England had not originated in fear of popery, and was not intended as a bulwark against its encroachments, but sprang from a design of the jacobite party to render king William and his whig ministers unpopular: that the jacobites expected the whigs would oppose that bill, and intended to impute that opposition to a partiality for the Romish faith; but that the whigs perceiving the object of their adversaries, suffered it to pass, though very inconsistent with their principles of freedom and toleration.^f Doctor Robertson, with some able coadjutors of his own order, deprecated the agitation which tended so much to excite the alarm and discontent of the people, and demonstrated the absurdity of anticipating the intention of legislature, by petitioning parliament against a bill not actually proposed. The motion was negatived through the influence of those able and enlightened men, though, it produced the effect which their sagacity had apprehended. The populace was soon taught to conceive, that the successful opposition sprang from a predilection for the popish doctrines, and burned with zeal against antichrist. To oppose popery, associations were formed by the lower classes in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other towns, under the instigation and conduct of fanatical and turbulent demagogues; and the populace rose to tumult and riot in various places. At Edinburgh and Glasgow the enthusiastic spirit fermented to an alarming degree; mobs set fire to popish chapels, and the dwelling houses of the catholics; and many zealots of higher ranks and better opportunities of knowledge, were absurd enough to approve of these outrages, *on the ground that it was proper for the people spiritedly to manifest their*

^f The author, who was present, remembers, that Mr. Dundas, to justify his position, read the account of the law from Burnet's history of his own times.

hatred of popery. The sufferers applied to Mr. Burke to present a petition to parliament, praying for a compensation on account of the losses which they had sustained. In promoting this application, Mr. Burke and his friends very strongly attacked the supineness of government, to which they imputed the mad violence of the populace ; but they adduced no proof that ministers had been negligent, or that the disturbances had arisen from causes over which they had any control.

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are imputed by Mr. Burke to the supineness of ministers.

ALTHOUGH this session lasted from November to July, and produced more political debate than any during the former part of the contest ; yet, long as it continued, and busy as it was, its acts are of very little legislative importance. The affairs of Ireland were again submitted to the consideration of the house, and various proposals were made for affording relief and assistance to the commercial interest of the sister kingdom ; but no regular plan was formed respecting the nature or extent of the aid which was to be expected and offered. The discussion was in a considerable degree confined to barren generalities. Several propositions were at length offered, but their practical consideration was deferred to the following session.

ON the 17th of June, the ministers brought a message to parliament concerning a hostile manifesto that was presented by the Spanish ambassador. To introduce this properly to the reader, it is necessary to revert to the king of Spain's character and disposition, together with the circumstances of the times. Though nothing could be more contrary to the solid interests of his kingdom than hostilities with Great Britain, yet Charles III., a monarch of weak understanding, narrow views, and the childish irritability of feeble minds, had, as we have seen, from a fancied insult, cherished against England an enmity which a real injury could not have justified when so adverse to the commercial and political benefit of his country. He was farther inflamed by that spirit of rivalry, which, in confined and uncomprehensive understandings, values comparative superiority above positive good. He was more anxious to impede the prosperity of England, than to advance the prosperity of Spain. In these causes chiefly originated the actual war and intended hostilities which

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this history has already recorded. When the present quarrel broke out between France and England, Spain, not yet prepared for the contest, professed a determination to observe a strict neutrality. She had offered her services as a mediator between the belligerent powers, and proposed to mix the separate claims of France and Spain into one view and treaty. On this principle, so strongly and justly reprobated by Mr. Pitt in the former war, a negotiation was opened. France now proposed an armistice, and a congress to be held at Madrid, whither the colonists should be permitted to send commissioners, and meanwhile be treated as an independent power. Both courts well knew that these terms were totally inadmissible, on the avowed principles of the court of London; the offer was therefore nugatory and insulting. Spain now openly avowed her hostile purposes, and on the 16th of June delivered a manifesto to the British secretary for foreign affairs. The manifesto in its object was nearly the same with those which had been often presented by the courts of Versailles and Madrid; it consisted of charges, without proof, of hostilities committed by England; and praise, contrary to proof, of the moderation and justice of France and Spain. It contained general allegations; of Spanish territories invaded, and Spanish subjects murdered by English, without any specification of the time and place in which the alleged atrocities were committed; or any evidence that they had ever been perpetrated. It stated demands of satisfaction, but adduced no evidence that complaints had ever before been made, or that any injuries existed; it was merely a tissue of assertion without proof; and which neither then, nor ever afterwards, received the slightest support from documents or any other evidence.^g As she, by her hostile manifesto, avowing her junction with the enemies and revolted subjects of Great Britain, committed an act of open and flagrant hostility, and brought no proof of any previous hostility on the part of England, **SPAIN WAS EVIDENTLY THE AGGRESSOR.**^h

Spain evidently the aggressor.

^g See Spanish manifesto in State Papers of 1779.

^h I herein differ from Mr. Belsham who asserts that Britain was the aggressor; but as this writer brings no proof of the truth of his assertion, and Spain, by her commencement of hostilities, brought such proof against the assertion, I must, instead of relying on the authority, rest upon the evidence, that not my

WHEN the manifesto was laid before parliament, opposition at first professed to join in a resolution to support the war against the house of Bourbon ; but, as they descended to detail, their eloquence was as usual directed to the crimination of ministers, much more than the security of their country. Lord North proposed to double the militia ; he, however, professedly made his proposition as a subject of discussion and modification. Three opinions were prevalent on this question : one recommended the adoption of the project as it was originally framed : the second preferred a mixed scheme, which, with a small augmentation of the militia, proposed to levy distinct volunteer corps ; and the third objected to any increase of the militia, and would trust to the spirit and patriotism of the nobility and gentry in raising forces, according to the offers which had been already made, and to the efforts of the people, who would unquestionably come forward to defend their king and country. The bill received such great alterations in the house of lords, as totally to change its original nature and in that state, it passed into a law.

THE supplies granted for 1779, amounted to seventy thousand seamen, and thirty thousand three hundred and forty-six soldiers, besides the army in America and the West Indies, which, including foreigners, consisted of about forty thousand. The services of the year were then estimated to require 15,072,654*l*. The land tax and duties upon malt furnished their proportions : seven millions were raised by annuities ; and a lottery, consisting of 49,000 tickets, was distributed among the subscribers, in the proportion of seven tickets, at 10*l*. each ticket, for every thousand pounds subscribed.ⁱ Lord North said he wanted to have borrowed eight millions, but could procure no more than seven. The whole amount of the money raised by a lottery, was to be distributed into prizes.^k The sinking fund furnished 2,071,854*l*. Exchequer bills

country but its enemies began the war. I confess, that though, as an historian, I hold myself bound to narrate the truth, whether favourable or unfavourable to Britain, as a Briton I feel more pleasure in recording its justice, than I should derive from being under the necessity of exhibiting its injustice ; and that I have a satisfaction in being convinced these islands did not provoke the confederacy of the great continental powers.

ⁱ History of Britain during lord North's administration, p. 355. ^k Ibid.

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to the amount of 3,400,000*l.* were voted ; and other less considerable articles of revenue completed the ways and means. A vote of credit for a million, was afterwards passed ; and the whole navy debt was left undischarged. The terms on which the loan was filled, were, besides the *douceur* of lottery tickets, three per cent. *per annum*, and an annuity of 3*l.* 15*s.* for the term of twenty-nine years, for every 100*l.* The annual interest payable on the money borrowed amounted to 472,500*l.* ; to raise which, an additional duty of five per cent. was laid on the full produce of the excise (beer, ale, soap, candles, and hides excepted), which was estimated at 282,109*l.* ; a tax on post horses of one penny a mile, 164,250*l.* ; and an additional duty of five per cent. on cambric, 36,000*l.* Various strictures were made on the profusion of public money, and motions of inquiry and censure were repeatedly proposed, and respectively negatived, by ministerial majorities. The session was closed on the 3d of July, by a speech in which the king expressed his cordial thanks for the exertions of parliament for the public welfare in the various departments of national service. He rejoiced that the courage and constancy of his people rose with the difficulties which they had to encounter ; and doubted not, that their efforts would finally prevail against their multiplied enemies.

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Hostilities in the West Indies.—Superior force of the French.—British, notwithstanding, capture St. Lucie.—Byron sails northwards to escort the mercantile fleet—in his absence D'Estaing captures Dominica, St. Vincents, and Grenada.—Engagement between the French fleet and Byron's indecisive.—North America.—Expedition to Georgia under colonel Campbell—who reduces the province.—Maitland's battle with Lincoln—impetuous courage of Fraser's highlanders.—D'Estaing, with a large force, arriving in Georgia, invests Savannah.—Memorable defence of that town by the British—the siege is raised.—Clinton continues a war of detachments.—Gallant exploits of the British troops, without any important result.—Europe.—Perilous situation of Britain.—Combined fleet parade in the channel.—English fleet, in imitation of Drake, endeavours to draw their armada to the narrow seas.—Enemy retreat.—France threatens an invasion.—Loyal and patriotic spirit and efforts of all parties to resist the enemy.—Voluntary contributions.—British fleet keeps the seas, and protects our trade.—Investment of Gibraltar.

THE first warlike operations of 1779 were in the West Indies : hostilities, indeed, had commenced there in 1778, but so late in the season, that, not to break the unity of the narrative, I include them in the account of the present year.

A CONSIDERABLE force had been stationed in the French West Indies, under the marquis de Bouille, who, by a sudden attack, made himself master of the island of Dominica. The success of this enterprise caused a general alarm through the British islands; the defence of which was then intrusted to two ships of the line, under admiral Barrington. A reinforcement, however, consisting of three ships of the line, three of fifty guns, and

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Superiority of the French.

The British, notwithstanding, capture St. Lucie.

Byron sails northwards to escort the mercantile fleet. In his absence, d'Estaing captures Dominica, St. Vincent's and Grenada.

three frigates, joined the admiral in the month of December, having on board general Grant, with a large body of land forces. The British armament, with this accession, sailed for St. Lucie, and arrived there on the 13th of December. D'Estaing now reached Martinique, and being joined by transports with nine thousand troops on board, conceived the hopes of crushing the small fleet which Barrington commanded, and reducing most of the windward British islands, before admiral Byron could come to their assistance : he threatened Barbadoes, St. Vincents, Grenada, and Tobago ; but learning the unexpected attack that was made upon St. Lucie, he was for the time obliged to derange his plans, and confine himself to defence. On the 17th of December, he landed at St. Lucie : the following day, he assailed the British forces : and, though much superior in number, after an obstinate contest, was defeated and obliged to abandon the island, which soon after surrendered to the British arms. On the 6th of January, Byron's fleet arriving at St. Lucie, rendered our forces superior to the French ; whereupon D'Estaing now acted on the defensive, and for five months kept himself in harbour within the bay of Fort Royal. Both fleets received reinforcements during the winter ; the English were joined by a squadron of ships under commodore Rowley, and the French by an armament headed by count de Grasse.

ADMIRAL BYRON, on the 6th of June, left St. Lucie, to conduct the merchant ships which were appointed to assemble at St. Christophers previously to their departure for England. In the absence of the British fleet, D'Estaing commenced offensive operations : a force, consisting of four thousand and fifty men, under the command of chevalier de Trolong du Romain, sailed from Martinique for St. Vincents, where they arrived on the 12th of June ; they immediately effected a landing, and opened a communication with the Caribbs. The original inhabitants of the island, who considered the British settlers as intruders on their possessions, were ready to join the French. The garrison consisted of three hundred and fifty effective men, besides those who were confined by sickness ; with such a handful of men, conceiving defence impracticable, lieutenant colonel Etherington, the com-

mander of the forces, and Mr. Valentine Morris, the governor of the island, surrendered St. Vincents on the same terms which had been granted to Dominica. Reinforced by La Motte Piquette, who arrived with troops and naval stores from Europe, D'Estaing sailed against Grenada, having twenty-six ships of the line, and near ten thousand land forces. The fate of the island was inevitable; but the resolute defence made by lord Macartney, the governor, long protected the settlement, until a hill that commanded the fort being forced, the British leader proposed to capitulate; but the French general having proposed terms unusually hard, the fort and island were necessitated to surrender at discretion. The appearance of the English fleet, consisting of twenty-one ships of the line, though too late to save Grenada, interposed seasonably for the preservation of Tobago, the only possession which remained to England of the islands which were ceded to her at the peace of Paris. A partial engagement followed, in which admiral Barrington, in the Prince of Wales, with the captains Sawyer and Gardner, in the Boyne and Sultan, sustained the whole weight of the French van. The action was indecisive; many of our ships suffered considerable damage, especially in their rigging; and admiral Barrington received a slight wound. The rapidly successive loss of our three valuable islands, had greatly alarmed our remaining West India possessions: but the approach of the hurricanes, added to the loss of men in the last action, repressed any farther attempts of D'Estaing during that season; and he soon after sailed for North America.

Engage-
ment be-
tween the
French
fleet and
Byron's
indecisive.

THE contrivers of a project, which, notwithstanding the failure of expected success, they still deem practicable, must rest their hopes of ultimate attainment on a variation of means. Repeated discomfiture did not convince British ministers that the colonies were not to be subdued; still our counsellors conceived they might be reduced through a change of plans, which should be carried into execution by more skilful and vigorous efforts. Alteration of schemes was one of the chief characteristics of the belligerent policy of government during the contest with America, which, in a great measure, was a war of experiments.

North
America.

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THE northern provinces had been the first scenes of hostilities, and afterwards the middle states; but the southern colonies, with little interruption, had been exempted from invasion. Overthrow in the north and inefficiency in the middle, government now hoped would be compensated by victory in the south; thither it was resolved to direct our efforts, and during the remainder of the conflict, Georgia the Carolinas, and Virginia, were the principal theatres of active enterprise.

SINCE, indeed, it was resolved to persevere in the attempted reduction, there were strong reasons for carrying our arms to the southern provinces: these colonies produced the commodities which were most wanted, and most valuable in the European markets. France took off an immense quantity of their staple products, and the quiet and security which they had hitherto enjoyed, admitted so vigorous a cultivation, that their export trade seemed little otherwise affected by the war, than what it suffered from the British cruisers. Thus, in effect, the continental credit in Europe was principally upheld by the southern colonies; and they became the medium through which they received those supplies, that were not only indispensably necessary to the support of the war, but even to the conducting of the common business and affairs of life.¹ Besides, it was believed, that, in the provinces in question, a much greater proportion of the inhabitants was well affected to the British government, than upon trial had been found among their northern countrymen; and ministers, in spite of experience, received those rumours as authentic information. It was therefore resolved to make an essay in the south, and to begin with Georgia. This province, though in itself neither great nor powerful, possessed considerable importance as a granary to the invaders, and a road to farther progress. It was extremely fruitful in rice, and thus could supply provisions to the royalists when at such a distance from their principal magazines; and being contiguous to East Florida, a loyal colony, where general Prevost was stationed with a body of troops, if recovered, would prove a key to the Carolinas. These reasons determined the British to

¹ See Annual Register, 1779. p. 29.

undertake an expedition to Georgia; and towards the close of the preceding year, the undertaking was commenced by a detachment from the main army.

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Expedition
to Georgia,
under co-
lonel
Campbell,
who re-
duces the
province.

THE land force destined to execute this project, consisted of the seventy-first regiment, two battalions of Hessians, and four of North and South Carolina loyalists, with a body of artillery, amounting in all to three thousand five hundred men, under the command of lieutenant colonel Campbell. Major general Prevost was ordered to join the expedition from East Florida, and take the command of the whole; but so ably did Campbell form his plans of attack, and so well was he supported by the spirit and bravery of his little army, and the cordial and zealous cooperation of commodore Parker and the naval forces, that the reduction of the province was completed before the arrival of Prevost.

HAVING left New York in November 1778, the British commander arrived, on the 23d of December, at the mouth of the Savannah river, upon which Savannah, the capital of Georgia, is situated, about fifteen miles from the sea. Near the metropolis, but farther down the river, How, the American general, was stationed with several regiments, for the double purpose of opposing the landing of the British, and protecting the town. Not fearing these adversaries, Campbell, on the 29th, disembarked his troops, in the face of the provincial musketry and artillery. The first that reached the land was captain Cameron, with the light infantry of Frazer's highlanders; the Americans received them with a general volley, by which the captain and a few others were killed. The native courage of the highlanders, by the death of their commander stimulated to revenge, hurried on with a force which numbers in vain endeavoured to oppose, and drove the Americans to the woods. Campbell, pursuing the dismayed foes, overtook them at a post near Savannah, which was so strong as to induce How to risk an engagement. His right was covered by a thick woody swamp, and the houses of a plantation filled with riflemen; his left reached the rice marshes upon the river; the town and fort of Savannah protected the rear; the artillery was disposed advantageously on both sides, and a trench of one hundred yards

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wide, together with a marshy rivulet, guarded the front. The colonists being somewhat more accessible on the left than in any other situation, there they expected the brunt of the British attack, and thither directed their chief attention and vigilance. The sagacity of Campbell discovered their opinions and views; and farther to encourage their belief, made a feint to send troops in that direction. Meanwhile having discovered a private path on the right of the enemy, he despatched sir James Baird, with the light troops, to turn the enemy's rear: conducted by a negro through the secret track, Baird accomplished his object, and assailed the Americans. Campbell finding that the stratagem had succeeded, now bore on the enemy in front. Thus surrounded, the provincials were completely defeated and routed, with the loss of four hundred men, while only seven of the British fell. This victory decided the fate of Savannah, which yielded without farther struggle; all Lower Georgia followed its example; and a great majority of the inhabitants not only abstained from resistance, but even took the oath of allegiance. The next care of Campbell was to form regulations for the tranquillity and government of the province; which duty he effected with great policy and ability.^m He now resolved to prosecute his success by an expedition into Upper Georgia, where many were said to be well disposed towards the British government, and only to wait for the support of the king's troops, that they might with safety declare their attachment. The march of Campbell, therefore, into the inland country had a double object; to establish a communication with the loyalists, and to reduce the remaining part of Georgia. Augusta, the second town of the province, lies upon the southern bank of the river Savannah, and is distant from the sea coast about one hundred and fifty miles. The previous arrangements necessary for marching through such an extent of country, in many places thinly and in some not at all inhabited, were so well adjusted by lieutenant colonel Campbell, that he met with few interruptions, except such as arose from the water courses in his way, the bridges over which were in most places destroyed. Upon

^m See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 72.

his approach to Augusta, a body of provincials, under the command of brigadier general Williamson, quitted the town, and retreated across the river.ⁿ From Augusta, Campbell despatched lieutenant colonel Hamilton towards the frontiers of Carolina, to encourage the loyalists by assurances of protection.

ALARMED by the rapid advances of the royal troops, the provincials made dispositions for arresting their progress. General Lincoln, commander of the Americans in the south, soon arrived on the northern bank with a great and increasing force. Campbell, not finding Augusta tenable, retreated down to Savannah; while Lincoln marched along the northern banks, with a view to cross the river and reconquer Georgia. While Lincoln was thus engaged, general Prevost conceived hopes of surprising Charleston: on the 10th of May, accordingly, the British troops reached Astley's ferry in the evening, and having passed the river, appeared before Charleston the following day. On the 12th the town was summoned to surrender, but to no purpose. The general having viewed the lines, was convinced, that, though unfinished, they were not to be forced without a loss of men which he could not spare. He knew that the garrison was more numerous than his troops, and that general Lincoln, having heard of his advance, was hastening to its relief from the back country with a numerous army; he therefore retired towards Georgia, took possession of Johns Island, a place separated from the main by a small inlet from the sea, and posted himself, until the arrival of ammunition expected from New York. Hearing that Lincoln was advancing to Lower Georgia, he departed for Savannah, in order to place the fort in the best possible condition of defence; and left to colonel Maitland the command of Johns Island, with a garrison consisting of the first battalion of the seventy-first regiment, much weakened and reduced in its numbers, a corps of Hessians, part of the North and South Carolina loyalists, and a detachment of artillery, amounting to about eight hundred men fit for duty. General Lincoln apprised that the

ⁿ Stedman, vol. ii. p. 106.

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Maitland's
battle with
Lincoln.

Impetuous
valour of
Fraser's
highlan-
ders.

garrison was in a weak state, projected to cut it off ; and on the 20th of June, he advanced against this handful, with about five thousand men. An attack on the British piquets first gave the alarm ; on which colonel Maitland immediately ordering his soldiers to arms, despatched two companies of highlanders to observe the motions of the enemy, until he should come up himself with his whole force. The impetuous valour of those brave mountaineers hurried them on too far, and their indignant courage forbade them to retreat, when surrounded by superior numbers : falling in with the left wing of the provincials, they commenced an attack against ten times their own force, and maintained the contest until all their officers^o were either killed or wounded ; of the two companies, only eleven made good their retreat.^p This partial success emboldened the Americans to attack the British lines, and a regiment of Hessians, overborne with the provincial force, had given away, and were communicating their confusion to the rest of our troops, when the remaining companies of the highlanders, by a movement equally judicious, bold, and rapid, stayed the progress of the American army, avenged the cause of their fallen countrymen, and gave a decisive turn to the fortune of the day. The heroism diffused itself over the British troops : the skill of colonel Maitland seized the happy moment, rallied the retreating Hessians, and repelled and routed the enemy. The Americans dispirited by so unsuccessful an attack, attempted no farther offensive operations until the unexpected arrival of D'Estaing reanimated their hopes of expelling the English from Lower Georgia. Informed of the coming of so powerful an auxiliary, Lincoln marched to join the French forces. Prevost prepared for the defence of Savannah, and despatched orders to colonel Maitland to repair thither with all possible haste ; old fortifications were strengthened, and new works con-

^o Among the slain was their brave commander, captain Charles Campbell, the eldest son and heir of the house of Ardlhattan in Argyleshire, a youth whom the writer recollects as a classfellow at St. Andrew's college, and of high promise. His conduct, during four campaigns in America, acquired him great military reputation, which he was rapidly increasing, when, in the 24th year of his age, he fell fighting for his king and country.

^p See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 117.

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D'Estaing
with a
large force
arriving in
Georgia,
invests
Savannah.

structed, under the direction of a masterly engineer, captain Moncrief. D'Estaing having landed his troops without waiting for the Americans, in terms of the most boasting bravado and illiberal insolence summoned the British general to surrender. Despising the gasconade, Prevost considered how he might gain time until the arrival of colonel Maitland ; he therefore sent a civil answer, desiring a truce for twenty-four hours. The Frenchman, in the confidence of vanity, doubted not that a surrender would be determined, and that the period wanted was for the purpose of drawing up propositions of capitulation : he therefore complied with the request. Meanwhile colonel Maitland, having marched with astonishing rapidity, reached Savannah ; and thus reinforced, the general notified his resolution to defend the place to the last extremity. Lincoln being now arrived, the combined armies made dispositions for carrying on the siege ; ground was broken on the 23d of September, and the British interrupted the operations by several successful sallies. On the 4th of October, the batteries of the besiegers being opened, a request was made by general Prevost, that the women and children might be permitted to leave the town, and embark on board vessels in the river, which should be placed under the protection of the count D'Estaing, and await the issue of the siege. This request, so agreeable to humanity, was refused in terms of insulting rudeness ; which showed that the French commander, having long proved himself destitute of the honour,^q was no less deficient in the manners, of a gentleman, and that dereliction of integrity often brings along with it a disregard for the decencies and proprieties of civilized life. On the morning of the 9th, D'Estaing made an attack upon the British lines ; two feigned assaults were intended to draw the attention of the besieged to the centre and left, while, in two columns, the main body turning the right of the British, should attack the rear. The operations began before day-light ; fortunately, one of the enemy's columns mistaking its way in the darkness, was entangled in a swamp adjoining the fortress, and exposed to the fire of the British batteries. Morning having dis-

Memorable
defence of
that town
by the
British.

^q He had broken his parole in a former war.

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covered this division not yet extricated from the morass, the British commenced immediately so hot a fire, as not only to prevent the enemy from turning the rear, but even from forming, and destroyed numbers of their men. Meanwhile D'Estaing himself, with the other column, advanced against a redoubt which served as an out-work for the garrison; the combat became extremely fierce and desperate; for a few minutes a French and American standard was planted on a parapet. The contest for the possession of the redoubt was long maintained by both sides; when lieutenant colonel Maitland, seizing the critical moment, ordered the grenadiers of the sixtieth regiment, with the marines, to move forward and charge the enemy's column, already staggering, under the obstinate resistance at the redoubt, and the slaughter which had been made by the artillery from the different batteries, as well as from the Germaine armed brig. This well-timed movement decided the fate of the attack: the assailants were repulsed, driven out of the ditch of the redoubt, and routed with redoubled slaughter, leaving behind them, in killed and wounded, six hundred and thirty-seven of the French troops, and two hundred and sixty-four of the Americans. The issue of this battle determined the siege; the allies separated; the Americans retreated to South Carolina, and the French returned to their ships. Soon after their embarkation, their fleet was dispersed by a storm; D'Estaing, with part of the ships, sailed for France, and the rest returned to the West Indies.

The siege
is raised.

Clinton
continues a
war of de-
tachments.

IN the northern provinces, the war this year was carried on in partial and detached expeditions, but productive of no important event. Sir George Collier, who succeeded admiral Gambier in the command of the fleet, had been employed on the coast of Nova Scotia; there, by his activity, enterprise, and vigilance, he had destroyed numbers of American privateers, which harassed the coasting trade of the colonists, and protected the British commerce to Canada and Nova Scotia, and the Newfoundland fisheries. For his services in the station being promoted to an higher employment, he repaired to New York; there sir Henry Clinton and he concerted an expedition to Virginia, not with any hopes of making a permanent impression on that central and valuable province, but with a

view to impair resources from which the enemy were principally supplied. By the exports of tobacco from the Chesapeake, the credit of congress with foreign nations was chiefly, if not wholly supported ; and, by the inland navigation of that bay, large quantities of salt provisions, the produce both of Virginia and North Carolina, were conveyed to the middle colonies for the subsistence of the American army. A detachment under general Matthew, consisting of eighteen hundred men, accompanied by sir George Collier with a ship of the line and four sloops of war, made a descent upon Virginia, burnt the town of Suffolk, took or destroyed an immense quantity of provisions and stores at Gosport and other parts on the coast at Portsmouth, and a great number of merchant ships belonging either to the Americans or their new allies, amounting in all to one hundred and thirty-seven. Having thus annoyed our enemies, and acquired a considerable booty, the armament returned to New York.^r General Clinton attacked Verplank's creek and Stoney point, two important posts on the Hudson river, commanding the passage at King's ferry, which was the most direct and convenient course of communication between the northern and middle colonies. On the approach of the British troops, the forts were abandoned : major general Tryon and sir George Collier undertook an expedition against Connecticut, which, abounding in men and provisions, was a great support to the American army : they successively reduced the several towns, took or destroyed the provisions, ammunition, stores, artillery, and ships, but respected private property as much as possible, and treated the provincials with meritorious lenity.^s General Tryon and admiral Collier now proceeded to relieve Penobscot, wherein general Maclean, with a detachment of about six hundred and fifty British, had established a post, in order to check the incursions of the provincials to Nova Scotia. The Americans attempted to surprise this fort, but finding the British prepared for their reception, made dispositions for a regular siege. On the 12th of August, Maclean learned that the next day an assault was intended. On

^r Mr. Belsham, in his narrative, disapproves of these expeditions as inconsistent with humanity ; as if it were contrary to humanity to impair in an enemy the means of doing us hurt ! ^s See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 143.

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the 13th, however, no attack was made. On the 14th, the garrison early in the morning discovered, to their great surprise, that the enemy had evacuated their works, and in the course of the day found the reason of their departure, in the approach of Collier's squadron. The American ships were taken or burnt; the soldiers and sailors endeavoured to save themselves by flight, but many of them died of fatigue. Collier, on returning to New York, was superseded by admiral Arbuthnot, and soon after embarked for England. The Americans surprised Stoney point some weeks after its capture, and having taken the fortress by surprise, behaved with the most laudable humanity to the prisoners; but on the approach of a British detachment, again evacuated the garrison. They also made an attempt on Powles hook, a British post on the Jersey shore, opposite to New York: Lee, an American major, had learned that a party from the garrison had gone up the country to forage. Advancing at night with three hundred men to the gate, he was mistaken by the sentinel for the officer who commanded the foraging party, and being by that means suffered to pass with his detachment, seized two redoubts. Major Sutherland, commander of the post, being alarmed, called together sixty Hessians, whose vigorous onset compelled the provincials to retire, with about forty prisoners: their retreat was by military men reckoned extremely precipitate.

Gallant exploits of the British troops, without any important result.

GENERAL CLINTON, informed of the arrival of D'Estaing in Georgia, and apprehending a descent upon New York, withdrew his troops from Rhode Island and other detached posts: and concentrating his forces, acted on the defensive for the rest of the campaign. Such, in this campaign, were the exploits of Clinton's forces, whose efforts and achievements bore fresh testimony to British valour, but produced no important results. Through all our exertions, no progress was made towards the attainment of the object.

A WAR of devastation was carried on between the Americans and Indians; in which, though the former were most frequently superior, they by no means subjugated their enemies.

THE Spaniards this year conquered West Florida, and entirely expelled the British from the Mississippi trade.

To compensate this loss, commodore Lutterel and captain Dalrymple captured fort Omoa, wherein they found two register ships, estimated at 640,000*l.* with about a fifth more in other plunder. France made a successful expedition to the coast of Africa, with a strong squadron destined afterwards to reinforce D'Estaing in the West Indies. The British forts, settlements, and factories at Senegal, on the Gambia, and other parts of the coast, being totally incapable of resisting, each were successively taken.

FROM distant regions we now return to Europe, where- Europe. in the combined force of the house of Bourbon was exerted to overpower Great Britain on her own element, but was exerted in vain.

UNWISE as Spain manifested herself, in seeking a contest with England, she had dexterously timed her avowal of hostile intentions: she had suspended her declaration until the arrival of her annual treasures from her dominions in America, and until she was able to join the French fleet in Europe. On the 12th of June, the armament of France sailed from Brest towards the coast of Spain; on the 16th, the Spanish minister had, as we have seen, delivered the manifesto; and, on the 24th of the same month, the Spanish fleet joined the French.

THE situation of England at this time appeared peculiarly perilous. She had formerly coped with the house of Bourbon, but had not been obliged to encounter its undivided strength. Her continental allies, by employing a considerable part of the land efforts of our enemies, had prevented their principal exertions from being directed to maritime operations. It had been often objected to her statesmen, that they too ambitiously courted foreign confederacies; her ministers were now censured for their total avoidance of continental connexions. She had now to stand alone against the Bourbon force, joined to her own revolted subjects; and while a great part of her power was employed against her ancient colonies, a naval armament in multitude of men, number, and size of ships, unprecedented in maritime history, prepared to bear down upon the remainder. Foreign nations, seeing her in such circumstances, considered her ruin as fast approaching: but the event soon showed, that however unwise it may be in Britain entirely to renounce alliances with European neigh-

Perilous
situation of
Britain.

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bours, yet in herself, in the resources of her own industry, ability, and spirit, she possesses the means of repelling every attempt of her enemies : gigantic as were the efforts, they did not avail.

BEFORE the commencement of the chief naval operations, a squadron of French made an attempt upon the island of Jersey. This attack, though easily repulsed, produced important consequences. Admiral Arbuthnot, on the 2d of May, was proceeding down the channel with a reinforcement of troops, and a large supply of provisions and stores, to join sir Henry Clinton, when he received intelligence that the French were in Jersey ; and, leaving his convoy at Torbay, he with his squadron hastened to the relief of the island. This laudable movement, though executed as rapidly as possible, besides being the cause of considerable delay in his own voyage, interfered with our plan for the naval campaign in Europe. It being apprehended, that as the season was advancing, the Brest fleet might be out, and attempt to intercept so valuable a convoy, ten ships of the line, under admiral Darby, were despatched from the channel fleet to conduct Arbuthnot beyond all probable danger. Our principal armament, which had been intended to block up the French in Brest harbour, to prevent its junction with the Spaniards, was deemed inadequate to the service, until it should be rejoined by Darby. During this interval, the two fleets of our enemies were enabled to meet : when united, they amounted to more than sixty ships of the line, with nearly an equal number of frigates ; and soon after their junction, this formidable armada steered towards the British coasts. Sir Charles Hardy, with thirty-eight sail of the line and a smaller proportion of frigates, was cruising in the chops of the channel, when the combined fleet passed him considerably to the eastward, about the middle of August and proceeded as far as Plymouth. The enemy in their way took the Ardent, a ship of the line that was sailing to join the British admiral. They made no attempt to land but continued in sight of Plymouth several days. After having paraded there to the great alarm of the people, a strong easterly gale drove them out to the ocean ; they ranged about the lands-end, Scilly islands, and adjacent parts, till the end of the month. On the 31st of Au-

The combined
fleets pa-
rade in the
channel.

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The English fleet endeavoured to draw this armada to the narrow seas. The enemy retreated.

France threatens an invasion.

Loyal and patriotic spirit and efforts of all parties to resist the enemy.

Voluntary contributions.

gust, sir Charles Hardy entered the channel in sight of the combined fleet, which made no attempt to oppose his passage. The British admiral, like his renowned predecessor Drake in similar circumstances, endeavoured to entice the enemy into the narrow seas where they could not have sufficiently expanded their force: but perhaps dreading the fate of the former armada, when it presumed to brave England on her own element, they retired. The enemy accompanied this ostentatious exhibition of their fleet, with threats of an invasion by a powerful army. The northern provinces of France were every where in motion; forces were marched down to the coasts of Normandy and Brittany; the ports in the bay and in the channel were crowded with shipping; and the general and principal officers were named by the king to command and act in a grand intended expedition. The British government, with suitable vigilance and activity, prepared to defeat the expected attack. Numerous cruisers were stationed in the channel, to watch the enemy's motions; the militia were embodied; they and the regular troops marched to our southern coasts, and cattle, horses, and whatever else could be conveniently moved, were, by a proclamation, driven into the interior country. The prospect of such danger roused the national spirit; party disputes were by the bulk of the people for a time forgotten; they no longer inquired whether North, or Fox would make the ablest minister, but agreed in thinking that Britain, an independent and free state, was happier, than she could be as the dependent province of an arbitrary monarchy. These thoughts, and the consequent sentiments, animated every loyal and patriotic heart. Public bodies and private individuals made voluntary contributions to raise men for the defence of their king and country. But our exertions were not confined to defence: while this mighty armament hovered over our coasts, a squadron of ships, under commodore Johnstone, alarmed the opposite shores of France; our cruisers and privateers annoyed the trade of our enemies; our own rich mercantile fleets from the East and West Indies came safe into harbour, while the Bourbon armament was at sea. The combined host returned to Brest harbour, where the bad state of their ships and sickness of their crews, confined them to port for the rest of

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The British fleet keeps the sea, and protects our trade.

the campaign. Thus the approach of this immense equipment, and the threatened invasion, proved mere empty bravadoes. Sir Charles Hardy continued till the beginning of November to cruise with his fleet. In spite of her combined enemies, Britannia still ruled the waves. The only commercial fleet that was in any danger, owed its peril to a private adventurer. Paul Jones, in the end of July, sailed with a squadron, consisting of a forty gun ship, a frigate of thirty-six and another of thirty-two guns, a brig of twelve guns, and a cutter, from port L'Orient, to intercept our homeward bound fleet from the Baltic. These merchantmen were under the convoy of the *Serapis*, of forty-four guns, captain Pierson, and the *Countess of Scarborough* of twenty guns, captain Percy. On the 23d of September, captain Pierson having discovered the enemy off Scarborough, made signal to the convoy to run ashore as soon as possible; and when near enough to perceive the superior force of the enemy, summoned the other frigate to his side. Jones, trusting to the numbers of his men and guns, offered battle; being within musket shot, he attacked the *Serapis*, and attempted to board her, but was repulsed. Captain Pierson, after gallantly maintaining the contest for a long time against the two largest ships of the enemy, at length seeing no hopes of success, in mercy to his men struck his colours. Percy with his twenty gun ship, made a no less valiant defence against Jones's frigate of thirty-two, but was compelled to strike. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was great; but that of the enemy much greater. Jones's own ship was so greatly damaged, that she sunk two days afterwards. In this engagement, two of the king's ships were lost; but their resistance saved the whole convoy, which escaped into different harbours.

Investment of Gibraltar.

ONE of the principal objects of Spain was Gibraltar; accordingly preparations were early made for proceeding against that fortress. Aware of the natural strength of the place, of the number and valour of its defenders, lately reinforced with troops, and supplied with ammunition and stores, the Spaniards saw that a siege would be impracticable, and that the only means of reduction was blockade: they therefore, in July, invested it by sea and land, but made no impression during the first campaign.

CHAP. XXIV.

Character of a statesman.—General view of Lord North's administration.—Arduous struggle in which Britain was engaged.—Her resources grow from her calls.—Her efforts rise with her difficulties.—Meeting of parliament.—The king's speech.—Extraordinary amendment proposed to the address.—Views of opposition.—Plan of systematic attack on ministers, under three general heads—to be respectively carried on under the conduct of Messrs. Burke, Fox, and Dunning.—State of Ireland.—Alarming associations.—Lord North's plan for affording them satisfaction.—Bills passed for that purpose.—Motions in the house of peers by the duke of Richmond and earl Shelburne respecting the profusion of public money.—Petitions by Yorkshire and London.—Mr. Burke undertakes the cause of public economy.—Celebrated bill of reform.—Motions respecting the increasing influence of the crown.—Increasing spirit of popular association.—Incident which damped that spirit.—Protestant society—extends from Scotland to England.—Lord George Gordon becomes an enthusiast against popery—president of the protestant society.—Petition to parliament for a repeal of the tolerant law—supported by an immense multitude that surround the parliament house.—Firm and manly conduct of the legislature.—Dreadful riots in London—numerous conflagrations—tremendous aspect of the burning metropolis—prisons broken open—bank threatened—attempt to cut the pipes of the new river—military reinforcements arrive—at length prove victorious—insurrection crushed—tranquillity restored—loud complaints against the lord mayor.—Parliament resumes its functions.—Supplies.—Session rises—Parliament dissolved.

AMONG the various considerations that enter into our estimates of the conduct and character of statesmen, there are two to which we may safely resort as just tests

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Character
of a states-
man.

of executorial ability: the first is general and comprehensive, and depends on the principles which direct their thoughts and actions; the second is particular, and modified by the existing case. The former of these tests consists in the nature and tendency of the objects pursued, and means employed in the whole system of their policy, according to the fitness of which we are enabled to characterise their administration as a series; the latter, in the nature and tendency of specific ends and measures, which relate merely to the circumstances of the time: according to the choice and adaptation of these, we appreciate any given part of an administration. It would be erroneous and feeble reasoning, to infer, from the want of one species of talent, the absence of every other. There have been ministers, to whose proceedings we could not apply the first of these standards, as they were evidently guided by no fixed principles of political science, and directed to no determinate objects of pursuit, or concerted plan of conduct, whose actions have been isolated experiments for extrication from special difficulties, and not the result of any systematic policy for general security against evil, or for the advancement of good. Though such men could not be consummate statesmen, yet might they exert, in the invention of expedients, very considerable ingenuity. In reviewing the policy of the successive counsellors concerned in our disputes with America, and considering the value of the objects, and the efficacy of the means, an attempt to discover grand, comprehensive, and beneficially practicable principles and schemes would be vain. Ministers had reasoned and acted as political empirica, and had even evinced themselves deficient in the limited experience to which an empiric trusts. Their proceedings not only proved them devoid of political wisdom, but of common information; on very obvious cases, which it behoved them to have thoroughly investigated. It is easy to see that combined wisdom and magnanimity might have avoided the American war; by abstaining from imposts less productive, than advantages which were enjoyed before their enactment; by concession, when more profitable than coercion; by voluntary grants, more glorious than attempts to exact; or if conciliatory offers of renewed inter-

General
view of
lord
North's
adminis-
tration.

course availed nothing, by rather totally abandoning the object, than persisting in it through means to which the value of the end was so little proportionate. By not preventing the American contest, the British government afforded an opportunity for the Bourbon ambition to bring on the French and Spanish wars ; and thus far a retrospect of ministerial conduct justified a conclusion, that their policy was, in its nature, feeble, inconsistent, and unwise, and in its effect, prejudicial to the country ; but when we trace their counsels and measures after we were actually involved in those evils, we find that it frequently possessed the secondary merit of lessening the evils which had been produced by themselves. In the late campaign, the most threatening which Britain had ever experienced, the preparations of ministers had warded off the dangers : the resistance of Great Britain to a mighty combination, filled European spectators with astonishment and respect : her resources seemed to grow with her necessities, and in no part of the world was her naval or military glory obscured. If many considered ministers as the ultimate authors of our miseries, yet not a few of these admitted their recent exertions for defending the country to have been powerful ; and in viewing our actual situation, great numbers either overlooked or forgot the cause. Resentment and indignation against our enemies, absorbed all thoughts of the impolicy which had enabled their malignity to operate. Patriotism called aloud, Let us punish our foes, and defend ourselves ; and prudence said, reflections on the causes of our state are now too late, our first care ought to be, to discover the means of extrication from our difficulties. Such were the sentiments which prevailed in Britain ; and if they implied no strong approbation of ministers, they contained at least little new reprehension. During the recess of parliament, some partial changes took place in the ministry : the earl of Gower, lord president of the council, resigned that high office, and was succeeded by the earl of Bathurst ; the earl of Hillsborough was appointed secretary of state for the southern department, in the room of lord Weymouth ; lord Stormont for the northern, lately occupied by lord Suffolk : but the three chief ministers

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Arduous
struggle in
which Bri-
tain was
engaged.

Her re-
sources
grow from
her calls,
and her
efforts rise
with her
difficulties.

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Meeting of
parlia-
ment.The king's
speech.Extraordi-
nary
amend-
ment pro-
posed to
the ad-
dress.

who presided over the treasury, American and naval affairs, continued to hold their offices.

PARLIAMENT met on the 25th of November. The speech from the throne observed, that we were called upon by every principle of duty, and every consideration of interest, to exert our united efforts in the support and defence of our country, attacked by an unjust and unprovoked war, and contending with one of the most dangerous confederacies that ever was formed against the crown and people of Great Britain. Here our king presented a description of his subjects, which was applicable to loyal, patriotic, and magnanimous Britons, then, and in all ages. "I know the character of my brave people; the menaces of their enemies, and the approach of danger, have no other effect on their minds, but to animate their courage, and to call forth that national spirit, which has so often checked and defeated the projects of ambition and injustice, and enabled the British fleets and armies to protect their country, to vindicate their rights, and at the same time to uphold and preserve the liberties of Europe." In exhorting his parliament to persevere in such efforts as would maintain the defence and security, and promote the common strength, wealth, and interest of all his dominions, he particularly recommended to their deliberations the state of Ireland.

AN amendment of a very extraordinary nature was moved to the address; its purport was, to contrast the situation of this country when his majesty ascended the throne, with its present state when the twentieth year of his reign had commenced; and in a very copious and minute detail, which included the principal events of the reign, it professed to exhibit the outset, progress, and result, and represented our condition as then prosperous, but now adverse; the prospect as then splendid, but now gloomy; imputing the alleged alteration to a change in the plans of government, it proposed to leave the new, and return to the old system. Presenting to the sovereign a dismal picture of his dominions, it declared that, in the opinion of its proposers, parliament would betray both their king and country, if they did not distinctly

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Views of
opposition.

Plan of sys-
tematic at-
tack on mi-
nisters,

under
three ge-
neral
heads,

to be re-
spectively
carried on
under the
conduct of
Messrs.
Burke,
Dunning,
and Fox.

state to his majesty, that nothing but new counsels and new counsellors could prevent the consummation of public ruin. In this projected remonstrance, the members of opposition departed from the tone which they had usually assumed, and demonstrated that they had now framed a much more general plan of operations, than in any of their former hostilities against ministers. They perceived that the public, in contemplating existing situations, began to forget the series of past events; and to recal these to the minds of the people, seems to have been the chief object of the proposition which they now offered to parliament. Never was more ability displayed by any parliamentary opposition, than in the plan of the minority this session; or more judgment, than in distributing the parts of the execution according to the talents of the principal leaders. They undertook to prove, first in general principle, and afterwards in detail, that the system of government was radically and completely wrong, and that a total change was necessary for the salvation of the country. The changes were proposed to take place in three different departments, economical, constitutional, and executorial. The expanded and philosophical mind of Burke was employed in grand schemes of political economy, so much the subject of analysis and deduction, since the publication of Smith's profound work; and of practical comparison, from the exertions of Neckar in the neighbouring kingdom. The preservation of the constitution, and the correction of alleged abuses in that admirable system, was the province assigned to him, whose vigorous and acute mind, enriched with legal knowledge, sharpened by forensic contention, and enlarged by senatorial deliberation, had chosen for its principal object the support of constitutional law and practice: to watch the balance of the orders, to correct the preponderancy in either scale, was the task assigned to Mr. Dunning: while the powerful and comprehensive genius, the penetrating sagacity, the bold and intrepid spirit, the luminous, forcible and impressive eloquence of Mr. Fox, were employed on the executorial conduct of ministers. The efforts, therefore, of opposition, besides various and separate objects of attack, were this session principally directed to political

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economy, the balance of the constitution, and the conduct of administration, under three distinguished leaders respectively, Messrs. Burke, Dunning, and Fox. The speeches in support of the amendment, contained outlines of proceedings, which occupied them during the session. After exhibiting the present reign in an historical series to the commencement of the preceding campaign, they went over the various operations, and endeavoured to demonstrate, that, in the whole and every part of their conduct, ministers had shown themselves totally unfit for their offices. This preliminary debate equalled the highest oratorical efforts which had ever been employed in the British senate; but its result was unfavourable to the ablest speakers; opposition were outvoted by a majority of two hundred and thirty-three to one hundred and thirty-four in the house of commons, and eighty to forty-one in the house of lords.

State of
Ireland.

AFTER the preliminary contention, the first object of opposition was the state of Ireland. It was understood, that during the recess a plan was to have been formed for giving our fellow-subjects such satisfaction as might equally conduce to the welfare of the sister kingdom and Britain. Members of opposition now censured ministers for not having taken effectual steps to satisfy the Irish nation. They drew a melancholy picture of the condition of Ireland, before its first application to the British parliament in 1778: they described the sentiments disappointment had excited in that kingdom, and the subsequent proceedings which had resulted from calamity and discontent. Separated from the exaggerations of orators, the following was the actual state of affairs: associations against the purchase and use of British manufactures, and for the encouragement, in every possible degree, of their own, had already taken place. At first these had only been partial, but now they were become universal, and the nonimportation and nonconsumption agreements included the usual penalties or denunciations of vengeance, not only against violators, but against those importers or sellers of the prohibited commodities who had not acceded to the general compact: to these had been joined associations of a very different nature, and to the apprehensions already de-

Alarming
associa-
tions.

scribed had been lately added the imminent danger of foreign invasion; a measure which was evidently intended, if not absolutely avowed, by France; and this situation was the more alarming, as the military force supported by Ireland had been continually drained off and weakened by the American war. In order to provide for their defence, they said it must be placed in those who were the most deeply interested in its success. The state was unable, or unwilling, to defend them effectually; and the mode of defence, which was unequal to their protection, might be ruinous to their liberties. Military societies were renewed, and their spirit became universal. They declared that they were designed for the double purpose, of defending their safety against foreign enemies, and their rights against domestic injustice. They affirmed that they were loyal to the king, and affectionate to Britain; but that it was with the loyalty and affection consistent with their own liberty and prosperity. In every part of the kingdom were seen to arise, as it were by magic, vast bodies of citizens serving at their own charges, choosing their own officers, who had been trained to great expertness, and obeying with exemplary regularity and steadiness. No nobleman or gentleman could show his face in the country, who did not fall in (which they did generally, and for the most part cheerfully) with the prevalent disposition of the inferior and middling classes of their countrymen. After having provided for their defence against foreign enemies,^t the Irish began to look towards their rights, or claims of rights, and in general declared the authority of the British parliament over them to be a flagrant usurpation. This state of things was not the work of a party, or of any particular set of men, but was produced and upheld by every rank, class, and denomination of people. A free and unlimited commerce with the whole world was the first, the great, and general object of redress, for which no compensation could be admitted, and without which no other concessions or advantages, however great and beneficial, could afford satisfaction. This was the *sine qua non*, from which there was no de-

^t See Annual Register, 1780.

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parture. Such was the state of affairs in Ireland; and during the recess of the British parliament, the Irish law-givers showed themselves inspired with the spirit of the nation. They declared in their addresses to the throne, that nothing less than a free and unlimited trade could save the country from ruin. From these facts opposition in both houses endeavoured to prove, that the deplorable and alarming condition of Ireland arose from the misconduct of ministers, in not having adopted measures for its relief; and made motions, charging them with criminal negligence respecting the sister kingdom: This accusation was powerfully supported by lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox, in their respective houses; ministers, without attempting to refute the statements, made a very able defence of their own conduct. They strongly contended that the condition of Ireland was owing to causes over which they had no control. In this part of the defence, the forcible and well directed understanding of Mr. Dundas was employed in vindicating administration; and exhibited a clear and masterly view of the defective system of our commercial policy respecting Ireland, in which her miseries originated many years before the appointment of the present ministers, and before the present reign. The restrictions imposed in the general system of our trade laws were conceived in prejudice, and founded in ignorance and impolicy; but the prejudices were so strengthened by time, and confirmed by the habits of a century, that they appeared at length to have become a part of our very constitution, which affected members of parliament as well as all ranks of the people; and thence the attempt made in the two preceding sessions to obtain only a moderate relaxation, met with the most determined opposition. The few who undertook the invidious task, finding themselves obliged to encounter prejudice without, as well as petitions and pleadings at the bar, were at length overborne by numbers. Distresses, which arose from the frame of our commercial policy, and the errors of public opinion, it was illiberal and unjust to impute to the servants of the executive government. From the charge of negligence, in not having formed a plan of relief during the recess, lord North himself undertook the defence of

1779.

ministry. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of other affairs in which they were occupied, they had actually bestowed much time and attention in collecting information, and forming a plan for the relief of Ireland; in a week, however, he should be ready to bring forward propositions for that purpose. Accordingly, on the 13th of December, he opened his scheme, and proposed; first, to repeal the laws which prohibited the exportation of Irish woollen manufactures from Ireland to any part of Europe; secondly, that so much of the act of the 19th George II. as prohibits the importation of glass into Ireland, except of British manufacture, or to export glass from that kingdom, should be repealed: and, thirdly, that Ireland should be suffered to carry on a trade of export and import to and from the British colonies in America and the West Indies, and her settlements on the coast of Africa, subject to such limitations, regulations, restrictions, and duties, as the parliament of Ireland should impose. The system of the minister was received with great satisfaction, and even applause, by opposition.

Lord North's plan for granting them satisfaction.

His introductory speech, with very great ability, accurate and extensive knowledge, exhibited a view of the state of Ireland and its causes, the necessity of amending its condition, and the principles which he proposed to apply as most conducive to the purpose. Bills founded on the two first propositions were accordingly introduced, passed both houses without any contest, and received the royal assent before the recess. The third, more complex in its nature, and requiring a great variety of investigation, was postponed till after the holidays; not only that time might be afforded for discussion, but that it might be known how the new measures affected the Irish. It passed in the month of February, 1780. These acts, imparting in so great a degree the benefit of a free trade, were received with rapturous gratitude by the warm hearts of the generous Irish. Instead of being dictated by colleagues of more imperious dispositions and narrower capacities, this wise and liberal plan resulted from lord North's own heart and understanding; and, by restoring harmony in disputes between branches of the same com-

Bills passed for that purpose.

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Motions in
the house
of peers by
the duke
of Rich-
mond and
earl Shel-
burne
respecting
the pro-
fusion of
public
money.

munity, demonstrated that conciliation is much sounder policy than coercion.

AMONG the various subjects of animadversion on the conduct of ministry, the waste of public money this session occupied more than even its usual attention. Provision for the national service originates in the representatives of the people; an inquiry, however into the application of the sums that have been voted, is certainly not foreign to the lords, who are a branch of the legislature; and consist of so great proprietors, proportionably affected by increase of impost: accordingly, peers in opposition took a very active share in endeavouring to scrutinize expenditure, and lessen profusion. The duke of Richmond and lord Shelburne charged ministers with the greatest prodigality, and respectively made motions of inquiry, intended to be prefatory to others which should embrace the whole circle of expenditure. The duke of Richmond laid down, as the basis of the proposed scrutiny, a few strong and comprehensive propositions: that by the infatuation of government, we were engaged in wars which necessarily demanded immense sums of money; that ministers ought, by the most rigid possible economy, to moderate enormous evils of their own creation; so far were they from exercising the frugality incumbent on all managers of the public money, but more especially on those to whose folly and misconduct the cost was owing, that unbounded prodigality was evident in the civil list, the army, the navy, and the ordnance, the four great sources of national expense; the people groaned under the burdens imposed on them for a supply to ministerial profusion: our chief rival was, under her skilful and upright financier, contracting her expenditure, while we, under our incapable and corrupt stewards, were increasing ours beyond all precedents of history, and all possibility of longer endurance.^u From these grounds inferring that either economy or ruin was the alternative, he proposed to commence the reform with the reduction of the civil list, and moved an address to his majesty, praying him to set the example; representing, that from

^u See parliamentary debates for 1780, duke of Richmond's motion for economical reform.

relieving the miseries of a distressed people, his crown would derive a lustre superior to any which could arise from external splendour; and that even after the requested curtailment, sufficient means would be left for every rational and beneficial purpose of regal magnificence. Ministerial peers admitted that there had been *some* want of frugality during the present administration; but whatever system of economy might be adopted, it should not begin with the crown, the splendour of which should be maintained, as including all the dignity and honour of the empire. It would be inconsistent and unjust in parliament to withdraw from the king that which had been unanimously granted. Lord Thurlow, with his masculine force of understanding, and acuteness of professional habits, encountered the motion more closely than any of the other peers. The proposition was founded on the alleged distresses of the people; the fact had not been established, it rested merely on his grace's assertion; if the miseries did exist, and did arise from public prodigality, the department in which it prevailed ought to be specified, and the alleged extravagance proved, that the remedy might be applied to the actual evil: were the cure to be an application of the civil list, the motion proposing merely a reduction, without specifying its extent, was vague and nugatory; it was impossible to understand its exact import; the house could not vote for an indefinite requisition. These arguments prevailed, and the motion was rejected by a majority of seventy-seven to thirty-six. Proceeding on the same general principle, the earl of Shelburne proposed to inquire into the extraordinaries of the army; he took an historical view of the sums expended under that head, of the armies supported, victories and advantages obtained, from the beginning of king William's war to the peace of Paris, and demonstrated that the sums charged in the accounts of 1779, were one million more upon that article than in any year of our former wars. After a detail illustrating ministerial prodigality, he moved a resolution, that the alarming addition annually made under the head of extraordinaries, required immediate check and control; but the motion was negatived by a considerable majority.

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Petitions
from
Yorkshire
and Lon-
don.

THE issue of these propositions for reducing the national expenditure, caused very great discontents in various parts of England. The enormous expense of our establishments, from the war, and from waste, began to be severely felt in the nation, and awakened the attention of the metropolis, and the different counties. Yorkshire and London, the chief districts of landed and moneyed property, took the lead in expressing alarm, petitioned parliament, and were followed by other corporations. The petition of the county of York, comprehensive in its object, explicit in its avowals, strong though temperate in its language, constitutional in its principles, exact and circumstantial in its detail, was the model on which other applications were formed. The nation, it set forth, had for several years been engaged in a very expensive and unfortunate war. Many of our valuable colonies had declared themselves independent, and formed a strict confederacy with our most inveterate enemies; the consequence of these combined misfortunes was a large addition to the national debt, a heavy accumulation of taxes, with a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land rents of the kingdom. Alarmed at the diminished resources and growing burdens of the country, and convinced that rigid frugality was now necessary for the salvation of the state, they observed with grief, that many individuals enjoyed sinecure places with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public service. They conceived the true end of every legitimate government to be the welfare of the community, and that the British constitution, which seeks the public good, peculiarly intrusts the national purse to the house of commons; and represented, that until effectual measures were taken to redress these grievances, by suppressing useless donatives, and preventing unnecessary and extravagant largesses, the grant of any additional sum of money, beyond the produce of the present taxes, would be injurious to the rights and property of the people, and derogatory from the honour and dignity of parliament. This petition was introduced by sir George Saville, the disinterested and patriotic member of that great, industrious, and opulent county. With much good sense, plain and

perspicuous reasoning, he supported the representation, and urged the necessity of giving it a favourable attention. Ministers did not object to the propriety of receiving this address; but, by postponing the consideration of its complaints, they eventually defeated its purpose.

THESE discussions concerning public expenditure were preludes to the celebrated plan of economical reform which was introduced this session by Mr. Edmund Burke. Before the recess, this philosophical orator delivered a speech, in which he exhibited the action and reaction of public profusion and corrupt influence; reviewed the present expenses and general establishments; stated principles, and expounded details, in order to ascertain utility. He intimated, that soon after the holidays, he would bring forward a plan for the reduction of public expenditure. Able men of all parties, knowing the immense grasp of the author's capacity, the extent and compass of his legislative views, the fullness and accuracy of his knowledge, the variety and novelty of his illustrations, waited with anxious expectation for the performance of his promise; ministers and their friends, anticipated statements and arguments which they would not receive with conviction, at least with pleasure and approbation; nevertheless, they assured themselves of philosophy, eloquence and poetic imagery, which would fill them with delight and astonishment. The 11th of February 1780, Mr. Burke presented his plan, comprehending two objects, the reduction of expense, and the better security of the independence of parliament. His introduction stated the difficulties which he must encounter in conducting a plan of reform lessening private emolument; by which it was proposed to sacrifice individual gain from donative, to general good in the retrenchment of unnecessary cost. In such a case private feeling was to be overborne by legislative reason; a man of long sighted and strong nerved humanity would consider, not so much from whom he took a superfluous enjoyment, as for whom he might preserve the absolute necessities of life. He laid down the following general principles, as the basis on which he was determined to raise his superstructure of reform: that all establishments, which furnish more matter of expense, more temptation to oppression, or more means and instruments of corrupt

Mr. Burke undertakes the cause of public economy.

Celebrated bill of reform.

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influence, than advantage to justice or political administration, ought to be abolished : these rules he applied to certain institutions, public estates, offices, and modes of disbursement, and proved, by accurate documents and conclusive arguments, that the inferior jurisdictions answered no purpose which might not be better effected by the supreme character of the sovereign. He proposed, therefore, that the principality of Wales, the county palatine of Chester, the dutchy and county palatine of Lancaster, and the dutchy of Cornwall, should be united to the crown ; and that offices now annexed to these separate jurisdictions, being sources of useless expense, and means of corrupt influence, should be abolished. His chief attention was bestowed on the household : he proposed to abolish the offices of treasurer, comptroller, cofferer, and master of the household ; the wardrobe and jewel offices, the board of works, and a great part of the civil branch of the board of ordnance ; subordinate treasuries, the pay offices of the army and navy, and the office of the paymaster of the pensions. These payments, he designed in future to be made by the exchequer, and the great patent officers of the exchequer reduced to fixed salaries, as the present lives and the reversions should successively fall. A great number of inferior places, too inconsiderable for historical particularization, were also to be abolished by the plan of Mr. Burke. He proposed to suppress the new office of third secretary of state, as totally unnecessary ; also to limit pensions to sixty thousand pounds a year, but without interfering with present holders ; and concluded his plan of reduction, by recommending the entire annihilation of the board of trade, as an office totally useless, answering none of its avowed purposes, merely providing eight members for parliament, and thereby retaining their services. To his scheme of reform, he subjoined a system of arrangement, which he conceived would effectually prevent all future prodigality of the civil list. In order to facilitate this regulation, he proposed to establish a fixed and invariable order in payments, to divide liquidations into nine classes^x, ranked respectively accord-

x 1st, the judges ; 2dly, ambassadors ; 3dly, tradesmen to the crown ; 4thly, domestic servants, and all persons with salaries not above two hundred a year ;

ing to the importance and justice of the demand, or to the inability of the persons entitled to enforce their pretensions. Such are the outlines of Mr. Burke's scheme for economical reform, wherein an impartial examiner must admit the justness and comprehensiveness of the general principles of political economy, also the accuracy of his details of office, and acknowledge that considerable saving would accrue to the nation from the adoption of the plan. The utility of economy, however, would have been much greater to infinitely more momentous departments of public expense, than any within the civil list—to the ordnance, the navy, and the army. It is probable, that if Mr. Burke had succeeded in his first project of reform, he afterwards would have carried his efforts to the largest sources of expense : all parties joined in bestowing the highest applause on the depth of his financial philosophy, and the profound research and acute discrimination which appeared in every part of his scheme ; but, when the principles came to be applied to the particular plans of reform, ministers did not accede. Burke grounded upon his system five bills, which, after much discussion, were at length severally rejected.

WHILE Mr. Burke was engaged in recommending public economy, Mr. Dunning was actively employed in attempting to remedy an evil which he deduced from public profusion. Petitions, both numerous and strong, were presented, deprecating the prevalent abuses, and especially the waste of public money. The principle of the several applications was the same ; that the national revenue ought to be solely employed for promoting the national benefit ; that every shilling which was otherwise expended, was injustice to the people ; and that a great portion of the prodigality was occupied in extending the authority of the crown and propping the power of ministers, which they never could support by wisdom and virtue. On the 6th of April the petitions were discussed, and a memorable

5thly, pensioners from the privy purse ; 6thly, holders of salaries above two hundred a year ; 7thly, the whole pension list ; 8thly, holders of offices of honour about the king ; 9thly, the lords of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer.

v See petitions for York, London, Westminster, and other places, in spring 1780.

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Motion re-
specting
the in-
creasing in-
fluence of
the crown.

debate ensued, in which Mr. Dunning took the lead in favour of the applicants : he exhibited, in a connected series, the history and philosophy of constitutional law ; the measures and causes which endangered our rights and liberties in former times ; presented a glowing picture of the conduct of ministers ; and endeavoured to prove that it had a similar tendency to the counsels which had produced so much mischief under the house of Stuart. From a very extensive, accurate, and interesting detail, in a series of acute and powerful reasoning, he drew the following conclusion : “ that the influence of the crown has increased, “ is increasing, and ought to be diminished ;” and proposed this allegation as a resolution to be voted by the house. Such a proposition summoned the chief ability and eloquence of the house in efforts of either attack or defence. So strongly did Dunning and his coadjutors impress many of the country gentlemen, that they joined opposition ; and to the consternation of ministers, and the surprise of their opponents, the motion was successful. Lord North in a few days recovered his wonted majority ; but opposition, elated with their late success, and the circumstances from which it proceeded, trusting they would be ultimately victorious, redoubled their exertions. The petitions were the subjects of repeated controversies ; in one of which^z, Mr. William Adam, a young member of high promise, exhibited a very masterly view of the dangers which accrue from agitating the multitude to an active interference in the government of the country. This gentleman, son of the eldest of the four celebrated brothers, was a native of Scotland, and educated at Edinburgh, at the time that university, headed by Robertson and supported by Blair and Fergusson, was at the zenith of literary glory. From Fergusson his sound and vigorous understanding imbibed the justest principles of ethics and of politics, and was taught to cherish and respect mingled liberty and order. His friend and relation, Robertson, instructed him, while he valued the rights of the people, to prize also the constitutional prerogatives of the crown. On the basis of phi-

^z On a motion of Mr. Dunning, April 24th, for an address to his majesty, deprecating the sudden dissolution or prorogation of parliament.

losophy, he raised the superstructure of history and of law ; and so founded and prepared, he procured a seat in parliament. Mr. Adam drew a striking picture of the progress from popular agitation to revolution and anarchy in the days of Charles I., and allowed that the opponents of the court began from justifiable and noble motives ; he marked the movements of so formidable an engine as the multitude, and followed its progress until its rapidity and force, becoming totally ungovernable, crushed the constitution. The genius of Mr. Fox gave a different interpretation to the same period of history, and ascribed the fate of Charles, and the calamities of his country, to the weak obstinacy of the king, who, by refusing, in the early part of his reign, to gratify the reasonable wishes of his people, provoked them to a resistance, which brought destruction on himself. The efforts of opposition, great as they were, did not, in the present session, recover the majority of the 6th of April.

A BILL was proposed for excluding contractors from parliament, and by ministers suffered to pass the house of commons with little opposition, probably from either a foreknowledge or predestination of its rejection by the other house. On the general ground of diminishing the influence of the crown, a bill was introduced for preventing revenue officers from voting at elections, but rejected by a small majority. On the 23d of March, lord North informed the commons, that the East India company not having made such proposals for the renewal of their charter as he deemed satisfactory, he should move the house for the speaker to give them the three years notice ordained by act of parliament, previous to the dissolution of their monopoly ; that the capital stock or debt of 4,200,000*l.* which the public owed to the company, should be fully paid on the 25th of April 1783, agreeably to the power of redemption included in the same act. Mr. Fox inveighed against this measure of the minister, as tending to deprive us of our India possessions, as he had lost us America. Lord North answered, that he intended nothing more than to prefer a legal claim, in behalf of the public, to the reversion of an undoubted right. The proposed notice did not preclude any propositions which might hereafter be made by the

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company, and did not restrain parliament from accepting any offers which it approved ; it merely intended to prevent a year of the public right to the reversion of the company's trade from slipping away without compensation. The company, as it was now established, was certainly the best medium for drawing home the revenues from the Indies ; but if they were either so unreasonable or imprudent as not to offer a fair bargain to the public, a new corporation might be formed, and effectual measures adopted to prevent or remedy the threatened evils. These representations of lord North were so reasonable, that his adversaries suffered him to carry his motion without a division.

On the 5th of May, general Conway proposed a plan of conciliation with America, by removing all their just complaints, without acknowledging their independence. It was opposed by ministers, as degrading and ineffectual ; and was faintly supported by the chief men of opposition, who thought it totally inadequate to its object. Repeated motions were made in both houses, for inquiring into the army extraordinaries and different articles of public expenditure ; but they were all negatived. Propositions were also offered for the removal of ministers, but met with the same fate. Associations continued to be formed both in London and other parts of England, the object of which was reform of abuses, with a change of measures and of men.

Increasing
spirit of
association.

Incident
which
damped
that spirit.

Extends
from Scot-
land to
England.

WHILE so many, both within and without parliament, displayed enmity to ministers, proceedings took place which damped the spirit of association, suspended all opposition, and produced unanimity in both legislative assemblies, in every enlightened well wisher to his king and country, to whatever sect or denomination he might belong. Legislature, finding the populace of Scotland so much averse to the relief of the Roman catholics, had not extended their system of tolerance to that country. The successful resistance of the Scottish zealots encouraged fanatics in England to expect that, by efforts equally vigorous, they might procure the repeal, on this side of the Tweed, of the laws which had been prevented on the other. A protestant society was formed in England, con-

sisting of members of nearly the same rank and character which composed the association of Scotland; persons who, though many of them were well meaning friends to the protestant religion, were generally uninformed men, and estimated popery by its former, not its modern state; and who were for applying towards papists that intolerant spirit which constituted one of the worst qualities of popery during the ages of ignorant credulity and clerical usurpation. The members of this protestant club had met, and declaimed, and wrote, and advertised, during the whole winter, but attracted the attention of neither ministers nor opposition. Had these humble associators been left to themselves, their fanaticism might have evaporated in harmless vanity, gratified by the distinction which its lowly votaries acquired from seeing their names in print, as members of committees for watching over the interests of religion; but the interference of a nobleman in their meetings and resolutions, gave a very different determination to their conduct. Lord George Gordon, younger brother of an illustrious family, was a youth of ingenuity and volatile fancy, but little guided by prudence and sound judgment: wild and chimerical in his notions, ungovernable in his passions, and excessive in dissipation, he was peculiarly marked by eccentricity of conduct. To such a character the extravagance of fanatical theology was no less adapted than any other fanciful hypothesis to dazzle his imagination, or impassioned enthusiasm to inflame his heart. He was, besides, fond of distinction; in the house of commons his lively and desultory sarcasms afforded relief to serious debate, but he was by no means qualified for attaining eminence as a British senator. Emulous rather than ambitious, if he acquired notoriety, he little regarded either the means or the objects. In Scotland he had taken an active share in the violence of the former year, and had corresponded with the most noted of the fanatical demagogues. In England, he intimated to the protestant club his theological sympathy; and proud of a titled associate, these persons complimented him with an offer of the president's chair. Behold lord George Gordon now the chief bulwark of the protestant faith against the approaches of antichrist! He entered

Lord
George
Gordon
becomes
an enthu-
siast
against
popery,

and presi-
dent of
the pro-
testant
society.

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Petition to
parliament
for the re-
peal of the
tolerant
law,

the more eagerly into the views of those reforming saints, because he saw they confined themselves to theological theory, without scrupulously inquiring into moral practice; and that if he displayed an ardent zeal against popery, the president of the protestant association might pursue his former course of life with as little restraint as before his conversion.^a His dress, however, and outward deportment, were formed entirely on the puritanical model: with the fanatical populace he passed for a primitive saint, and possessed an influence compounded of the effects of his exalted rank, sanctimonious appearance, and antipopish zeal. These causes combining with the natural and habitual wildness of his irregular mind, produced in the end of May propositions of a most inflammatory nature, which were speedily adopted as resolutions by the society. On Monday the 29th of May, a meeting was held at coachmakers' hall, to consider the mode of presenting to the house of commons a petition against popery. In a most furious speech, lord George endeavoured to persuade his hearers of the rapid and alarming progress of the Romish doctrines; declared that the only way to obstruct their progress, was by approaching parliament with a firm and resolute tone, and demonstrating to their representatives that they were determined to preserve their religious freedom with their lives. He would himself run all hazards with the people, when their conscience and their country called them forth: he was not a lukewarm man: if they meant to spend their time in mock debate and idle opposition, they must choose another leader. A speech so perfectly coincident with the passions and prepossessions of its hearers, was, received with the loudest applause. The president moved a resolution, that the whole protestant association should, on the following Friday, meet in St. George's Fields, at ten o'clock, and thence proceed to the house of commons. They were to advance in four divisions, the protestants of the city of London occupying the right wing, were to file off

^a Mr. Wilkes, who had often been the companion of lord George's nocturnal adventures, applied to him, after his regeneration, part of a latin epitaph on Fleetwood Shepherd, another very zealous religionist of similar habits and propensities: *Nulla meretrix displicuit, praeter Babylonicam---Except the harlot of Babylon, he was a friend to the whole sisterhood.*

to London bridge, and to march through the city; those of Southwark in the centre, were to take the route of Blackfriars; the left wing belonging to Westminster wheeling to the left, were to cross Westminster bridge, followed by the presbyterians from Scotland, who were to cover the rear. The friends of the reformed religion were to ascertain their attachment to the faith by blue cockades, bearing the inscription *No popery*. These resolutions and dispositions might have alarmed men, who considered the powerful operation of religious fury, and the dreadful effects which it has so often produced; but ministers appeared to apprehend no danger, and actually, in the intervening days, adopted no measures for preventing tumult.

On Friday the second of June, at the hour appointed, about fifty thousand persons met in the fields, and thence proceeded in the prescribed order to the house of commons; having arrived at the avenues to both houses of parliament, they insulted many of the members who were proceeding to discharge their senatorial duty. Lord George repeatedly came from the place which he held as a senator, and harangued the populace, exhorting them to persevere in urging their application, so as to threaten the violation of a senator's privilege. Several members expostulated with him on the outrages which his conduct was likely to produce^b. The petition being presented, was, after very little debate, rejected by a majority of one hundred and ninety-two to six. In the evening a mob burned the Romish chapels belonging to the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors. On Saturday, the riots partly subsided. *Sunday*, the zealots again assembled to disturb the tranquillity of their fellow-subjects, to violate

A mob surrounds parliament.

Firm and manly conduct of the legislature.

Dreadful riots in London.

^b Lord George still exhorted the mob to persist, and many feared that the banditti would break into the house; whereupon a gallant veteran, belonging to as noble a family as lord George himself, and a member of parliament, putting his hand upon his sword, said, "Lord George, if one man of your lawless followers enter our house, I shall consider rebellion as begun, and plunge my sword into you as its leader and promoter." This resolute speech restrained the violence of Gordon, and is supposed to have contributed powerfully to save the house from such audacious intrusion.*

* Of this fact, I was informed many years ago, by a gentleman who was present; and often have heard it repeated by others. The officer was general James Murray, uncle to the duke of Athol.

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law, order, and justice. Directing their outrages against Moorfields, where there were many catholics, they destroyed dwelling houses and chapels. On Monday the rioters again assembled, and were joined by a multitude of those profligate and disorderly wretches, whom folly and vice, in the luxuries of a large and opulent city, impel to supply by depredation the want of industry and virtue. Lawless atrocity being now united to religious frenzy, produced more extensive and pernicious operations. They burnt the houses of protestants as well as catholics, and added plunder to conflagration. A proclamation was issued, offering a reward of 500l. for the discovery of the incendiaries, who, the first evening of the tumults, had set fire to the chapels of the ambassadors. Persons charged with this crime were sent to Newgate, escorted by a party of guards; and the soldiers were insulted and abused by the insurgents for performing their duty. On Tuesday, all the troops in town were distributed to assist the civil powers in protecting the lives and properties of their fellow-subjects, against the frantic outrages of temporary insanity, joined to the skilful and dexterous wickedness of habitual depravity. But the precautions of ministers had been neither proportionate to the danger, nor adopted at the season when the first appearance of tumult called for vigilance and vigour. The military force was on that day inadequate to its purposes, robbery and destruction rapidly increased. After burning many private houses, the insurgents proceeded to Newgate, set that building on fire, and by releasing the prisoners, acquired a reinforcement of three hundred ruffians, eager to promote, and ready to execute, their projects of desperate villany. Instigated and assisted by this new band, they directed their attempts against the magistrates who were most active in apprehending felons and repressing crimes, and with peculiar exultation they destroyed the house and effects of sir John Fielding. Resolved to attack justice in every department, they proceeded from her operative instrument to her supreme and wisest interpreter, and most vigilant guardian. Hastening to Bloomsbury square, they attacked the house of the illustrious Mansfield, plundered and destroyed the valua-

Numerous
conflagra-
tions.

ble furniture, the constituents of accommodation and ornament; pictures, statues, and sculpture, the monuments of the attic elegance and taste which decorated genius and philosophy: but they effected a more momentous and irreparable mischief; proceeding to the library, they destroyed not only the books, but the manuscripts. The efforts of the highest talents, directed to the most important objects, with complete and comprehensive knowledge of the science of jurisprudence, the laws of this country, the details of cases varying so greatly in the manifold and complicated engagements of social, civil, and commercial life, in a great, powerful, and free people; the judicial and legislative wisdom of sixty years fell a sacrifice to the ruffian violence of an hour. When the yell of savage fury was heard approaching, lord Mansfield and his lady escaped by a postern, sought and found an asylum from royal hospitality.^d On Wednesday, proceeding to Holborn, they set fire to two houses belonging to Mr. Langdale, an eminent distiller, which contained immense quantities of spirituous liquors; here the conflagration was terrible. Different gangs now undertook and effected the demolition of the several prisons. All trade was at a stand, houses and shops were shut, dread and consternation overspread the whole city. Wednesday evening, when drawing to a close, presented a scene the most tremendous and dismal, apparently portending the speedy downfall of the British metropolis, and the overthrow of the British government. At the same instant was seen, flames ascending and rolling in clouds from the king's bench and fleet prisons, new bridewell, the toll gates on Blackfriars bridge, houses in every quarter of the town, and especially the combustion of distilled spirits in Holborn. The approaching night was expected to bring destruction and desolation, and thirty fires were now seen blazing at one time in different quarters of the city; men and women were running from place to place, trying to secure their most

Tremendous aspect of the burning metropolis.

Prisons broken open.

^d They passed the two following days at Buckingham house; where the sage, after so recent a view of the dreadful effects of unrestrained passion and triumphant vice entertained his queen with reciting, from the instructive inculcations, elegant composition, and impressive eloquence of Blair, the charms of wisdom and the happiness of virtue.

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The bank
threaten-
ed.
Attempt to
cut the
pipes of
the new
river.

Military
reinforce-
ments ar-
rive ;

and at
length
prove vic-
torious.

valued effects, and to deposit in safety their helpless children. Now was heard the fell roar of savage ferocity, now the reports of musketry, endeavouring by the last resource of necessity, to repress rebellious fury, but hitherto with little effect; and every thing appeared to menace universal anarchy and devastation. Attempts were made on the repositories of national treasure. A banditti of rioters made an effort to break into the pay office, while the main body directed their attempt against the bank, and a powerful detachment was sent off to cooperate with the incendiaries, by cutting the pipes of the new river. But now the career of infatuation and anarchy was destined to have an end.

THE ministers were certainly too tardy in collecting the armed force of the country, and thus suffered the insurgents to incur heinous guilt, and perpetrate irremediable and immense mischief. The chief municipal magistrate, overwhelmed with the same terror that had seized the rest of the inhabitants, brought no active or efficient civil force to assist the military. Though ministers were tardy, yet they were at length by necessity roused to vigour and energy. They assembled the militia and regulars in sufficient time to preserve the capital from conflagration, and the kingdom from ruin. Until Wednesday evening the insurgents had been paramount, and the soldiers unable to oppose their outrages; but they were now assembled in such numbers and inspired with such resolution, as effectually to resist, and afterwards to overpower the depredators and anarchists. The three preceding days and nights had been to the incendiaries seasons of unresisted victory: this was a night of contest. The troops at length prevailed. The numbers killed in this conflict were considerable: many indeed died of inebriation, especially at the distillery of the unfortunate Mr. Langdale, from whose vessels the liquor ran down the street, was taken up by pail fulls, and held to the mouths of the deluded multitude. The soldiers had been so successful during the night, and received such reinforcements, that on Thursday the inhabitants began to recover from their consternation. The riots, however, being by no means quelled, the shops continued universally shut, and no business was

transacted but at the bank. During this day, the soldiers were so active, that the insurgents were dispersed, and did not attempt to rally at night; the following day London appeared restored to order and tranquillity, lord George Gordon being apprehended by a warrant from the secretary of state, and committed to the Tower. Thus ended the tumult of 1780.

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Insurrec-
tion crush-
ed, and
tranquillity
restored.

IN retracing this tremendous insurrection, this horrible carnage and devastation, through the several causes, more or less proximate, to the ultimate; from military execution to rebellious outrage; English protestant association, springing from Scottish association; we find that the series originated in the well meant, but misguided zeal of a few Scottish clergymen, who, contrary to the advice of the ablest and wisest men of their order, agitated the subject in the general assembly, and thereby excited a ferment through the people. So cautiously ought men to investigate and appreciate objects, and to consider consequences before they set in motion such a formidable engine as popular enthusiasm. Issuing from impassioned fanaticism, this insurrection began, most fortunately for the country, without any concerted plan. Had the bank and the public offices been the first objects of tumultuous fury, instead of the houses of individuals, the chapels and the prisons, there can be little doubt that they would have succeeded in their attempt. To the lord mayor, government and many others imputed the progress of the riots to such a pitch of atrocity. Very strong and pointed representations from the secretary of state urged him to use every legal exertion. These not having produced the desired effect, were necessarily repeated in the form of remonstrances. It was alleged, on the other hand, in defence of the magistrate, that the provision of military force in the environs of London was so little adequate to the exigency of the case, as to render every effort of civil power unavailing. To this defence it was replied, that the inefficiency of the civil power could not be certainly pronounced, as it was not actually tried; and that since the soldiers by themselves prevented the utter destruction of the capital, until the arrival of sufficient troops from the country, if they had been assisted by the municipal force, they might have

Loud com-
plaints
against the
lord
mayor.

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much sooner repressed the insurgents, and prevented a great part of the mischief. Neither duty nor policy, it was said, can justify the commander of a considerable force, in the moment of threatened ruin to his country, to withhold his efforts, on a supposition that they may not ultimately prevail. Both wisdom and patriotism dictate resistance, as the only means of success against the invaders of our law, liberty, and property.

THE effects produced by the riots on the public mind, are not undeserving of historical notice. Before this period, an English mob was generally considered as a test of the public opinion, an effusion of popular energy; military interference was reckoned dangerous, if not altogether unconstitutional. This seemed to be the opinion of the duke of Newcastle, when he kept a mob in pay, ready trained and disciplined, to support the recent accession of the house of Hanover, and to suppress tory tumults; a mode of conduct which had a more successful, or at least a more popular effect, than recourse to military force. But this conduct of the mob of 1780, destroyed the credit and consequence of such a body; and the disturbance has been, upon the whole, deemed fortunate for the internal peace of the country, as it has taught government to oppose the smallest beginnings of riot or popular commotion.

On the 6th day of June, during the insurrection, above two hundred members of the house of commons had the courage to attend their duty, in spite of the banditti that occupied every avenue to the senate. They forced their way through the mob, and having taken their places in the house, unanimously passed spirited resolutions, becoming the dignity of legislators who disdained to succumb to lawless outrage. The first was an assertion of their own privileges; the second, a motion for a committee to inquire into the late and present outrages, and for the discovery of their authors, promoters, and abettors; the third, for a prosecution by the attorney general; and the fourth, an address to his majesty, for the reimbursement of the foreign ministers, to the amount of the damages which they had sustained by the rioters. They afterwards met on the 8th, but judged it expedient to adjourn to the 10th, that

Parliament resumes its functions.

order might be completely restored ; and the house of lords adjourned to the same day. At their next meeting, his majesty was pleased to come to parliament, in order to exhibit to the legislature a general view of the measures which had been employed during the recent suspension of regular government. " The outrages," said the king, " committed by the hands of desperate and abandoned " men in various parts of this metropolis, having broke " forth with violence into acts of felony and treason, " had so far overborne all civil authority, and threatened " so directly the immediate subversion of all legal power, " the destruction of all property, and the confusion of every " order in the state, that I found myself obliged, by every " tie of duty and affection to my people, to suppress in " every part those rebellious insurrections, and to provide " for the public safety by the most effectual and immediate " application of the force intrusted to me by parliament. " Though I trust it is not necessary, yet I think it right " at this time to renew to you my solemn assurances, that " I have no other object but to make the laws of the realm, " and the principles of our excellent constitution in church " and state, the rule and measure of my conduct ; and I " shall ever consider it as the first duty of my station, and " the chief glory of my reign, to maintain and preserve the " established religion of my kingdoms, and, as far as in me " lies, to secure and perpetuate the rights and liberties of my " people." All parties agreed in applauding their sovereign's speech, and in voting a loyal address ; though some members censured the tardiness with which ministers had prepared for the defence of the metropolis. The following day, a committee of the whole house considered the several petitions, praying for a repeal of the late bill, which had been made the occasion of so much mischief. No repeal was proposed upon those petitions ; no evil had actually happened from the relaxation of the single penal law which had been mitigated, and the consequences apprehended from it were considered as improbable and visionary. The protestant association still continuing to urge parliament to attend to their application, a bill was brought in by way of compromise, to prevent Roman catholics from teaching protestants ; a measure which was sup-

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posed to be both conciliatory and innoxious, as very few of that religion were teachers. The bill having passed the commons, was carried to the house of lords: several peers, considering it a great indignity to parliament, and to that house particularly, to pass a bill which carried all the appearance of being forced upon them by outrage and threat, opposed its inactment. At length, others being impressed with the same idea, it was set aside by the usual expedient of fixing its farther consideration on a day after the time when they knew parliament was to be prorogued.

Supplies.

THE supplies for the service of the year 1780 amounted to 21,196,496*l*. The number of seamen employed was eighty-five thousand, including marines, and thirty-five thousand British troops, including invalids, besides the forces abroad. No more than a million and a half of the navy debt was discharged. The extraordinary expenses of the army amounted to 2,418,805*l*. The new taxes, which had been levied the two preceding years to pay the interest upon the money borrowed, were found to be very inadequate to their object; recourse was therefore had to the sinking fund to make good this failure. To provide for these expenses, in addition to the usual resources of land and malt, exchequer bills were renewed to the same amount as the former year. The sinking fund was to provide two millions and a half, twelve millions were borrowed upon annuities, and 480,000*l*. raised by a lottery. The annuity bore four *per cent.* interest, and a farther annuity of 1*l*. 15*s*. 3*d*. for every 100*l*. for the term of eight years, the subscribers to be entitled to four lottery tickets for every thousand pounds subscribed, on payment of ten pounds for each ticket. The additional duties were, on malt, low wines, spirits, brandy, and rum, wines of Portugal and France, and legacies; on tea, coffee, and chocolate; and on advertisements in newspapers. All these taxes were levied from luxuries, or benefits enjoyed by the persons taxed: but duties on coals and on salt enhanced the price of necessaries, and bore heavy on the poor, whom every wise financier endeavours to press lightly. A vote of credit also for a million was passed, in addition to these supplies. At the

conclusion of the session, his majesty, after having considered in his speech the war supplies and other usual topics, spoke in the following terms, at once generally descriptive of the duties of senators when retired to the sphere of their respective influence, and appropriate to the present time and situation: "My lords and gentlemen, let me earnestly recommend to you to assist me, by your influence and authority in your several counties, as you have by your unanimous support in parliament, in guarding the peace of the kingdom from future disturbances, and watching over the preservation of the public safety. Make my people sensible of the happiness they enjoy, and the distinguished advantages they derive FROM OUR EXCELLENT CONSTITUTION IN CHURCH AND STATE. Warn them of the hazard of innovation, point out to them the fatal consequences of such commotions as have lately been excited, and let it be your care to impress on their minds this important truth—that rebellious insurrections, to resist, or to reform the laws, must end either in the destruction of the persons who make the attempt, or in subversion of our free and happy constitution." Thus ended, on the 8th of July, a very long and important session; and two months after the prorogation, parliament was dissolved.

Parliament is dissolved.

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War with the French in India—siege and capture of Pondicherry—confederacy against the British interest—war with the Mahrattas—is concluded by the treaty at Poonah.—Hyder Ally instigates and forms a combination of native power against British India.—Warren Hastings—lofty genius—grand scheme for dissolving the confederacy—preparations of Hyder Ally to invade the Carnatic.—Europe.—Admiral Rodney—vindicates the naval glory of England by a signal victory over the Spanish fleet—important effects of this battle—relieves Gibraltar.—Spanish and French fleets do not attempt a junction.—Capture of the outward bound merchantmen—admiralty severely blamed.—America.—Expedition against Charleston by sir Henry Clinton—strength of that place, natural and artificial—siege—reduction—the province of South Carolina yields to the British arms.—Leaving the government of Carolina to lord Cornwallis, Clinton returns to New York.—Wise administration of his lordship—obliged to take the field against general Gates—battle of Camden—lord Rawdon—victory of the king's troops.—Achievements of Tarleton—of major Fergusson, that able and gallant officer surprised and overpowered by numbers—death and character.—Affairs at New York—defection of general Arnold—character, enterprise, and fate of major Andre.—West Indies.—Rodney arrives—his skill draws the enemy to battle—established mode of forming the naval line—Rodney adopts a new plan of attack BY BREAKING THE ENEMY'S LINE—some captains misconceiving his intention, disconcert the execution—the event therefore indecisive—partial conflicts, but the enemy, though much superior in number, will not venture a close fight.—The enemy are disappointed in their chief objects of the campaign 1780.

WHEN Britain and France quarrel, the contests of these two boldest, most enterprising, and ablest of modern nations, affect the remotest regions of the earth. Disputes springing on the neighbouring coasts of the channel, tinge the distant Ganges with blood; and the pacific feebleness of eastern Asia mourns the warlike energy of western Europe.

THE English East India company, with a perspicacity sharpened by private interest, had early penetrated into the hostile intentions of France, and saw that the semblance of peace could not long be preserved, and that no intermediate state, however coloured or disguised, could be kept long free from all the consequences of war; they were aware that, long before any account of their proceedings in the East could be received in Europe, these consequences would take such effect as to afford a sufficient cover and sanction to their measures. Before the commencement of the former war, the French had clandestinely conveyed so great an army to the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, as to endanger the destruction of the British interest in India. Such a force might soon again be formed in those islands with equal privacy, and passing to Pondicherry, might enter the company's dominions so suddenly, as irresistibly to secure their possessions. Against so probable a danger, they immediately, on the delivery of the French rescript, resolved on a bold and decisive measure; and numerous as their body was, they conducted their plan with such extraordinary secrecy, that none entertained the smallest idea of the design, until the effect was publicly disclosed by the accounts from India. They proposed to undertake the siege of Pondicherry, the principal possession of the French; and fortunately the instructions were conveyed with unusual despatch to Madras. Major general Munro, early in August 1778, advanced at the head of the company's troops to the neighbourhood of Pondicherry. The naval force of England in those seas was commanded by sir Edward Vernon, and consisted of the Rippon of sixty guns, the Coventry of twenty-eight, the Sea Horse of twenty, the Cormorant sloop, and the Valentine East Indiaman. This small force fearlessly adventured to

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capture of
Pondicherry.

attack this strong city of the French. On the 10th of August they arrived at this station, and discovered a squadron, which was commanded by M. De Tronjolly, consisting of one ship of sixty-four guns, one of thirty-six, one of thirty-two, and two French India ships armed for war. A very hot engagement ensued, and lasted above two hours, when, on the approach of night, the French retreated. Vernon expected that the admiral of the enemy, trusting to his superior force, would renew the battle the next morning; a contrary wind, however, and a northern current, drove the British ships from their station in the middle of the night, and they were not able to recover it until the 20th of the month. Having regained sight of Pondicherry, they perceived the French fleet in the road: an immediate engagement was now expected, and nothing was left undone by the commodore, in order to close with the enemy; but the alternate failure and contrary direction of the wind rendered all his efforts ineffectual: he trusted, however, that a battle would certainly take place the following morning. The French commander consulted the preservation of his ships more than the defence of the town, and during the night abandoned Pondicherry; and so expeditious was he in his means of escape, that his squadron were totally out of sight in the morning. The success of Vernon, and the departure of the French fleet, facilitated the operations of the besiegers, and appeared to afford a certain prospect of success. On the 21st of August, the land forces invested the town and fortress, while the fleet blockaded it by sea. Though the fort of Pondicherry was dismantled on its restoration to the French by the peace of Paris, yet fresh works had been since raised; but the chief strength consisted in the valour and conduct of its governor, M. de Bellecombe, and the courage of the garrison, who, nearly cut off from every hope of succour, persevered to the last extremity in a determined and gallant defence; they were opposed, however, by equal courage and military ability, with superior numbers. On the 18th of September, the batteries were opened, under the powerful fire of twenty-eight pièces of heavy cannon, and twenty-seven mortars. The artillery of the besiegers soon gained an evident superior-

rity, and they were indefatigable in carrying on their approaches; but the activity and obstinate defence of the garrison rendered caution necessary, and, with violent rains which then frequently fell, could not fail of considerably retarding their works. Notwithstanding these impediments, the siege was so far advanced by the middle of October, as to render a general assault practicable; and on the 17th, every thing was ready for beginning the attack. Aware of the hopelessness of longer defence against such force, and of the ruin in which an obstinate and unfounded perseverance would involve his garrison and the inhabitants, the French commander proposed a capitulation, which was willingly accepted by the English leaders. The victorious warriors, with the generosity of British conquerors, bore the most ample and honourable testimony to the gallantry of their enemy, and liberally agreed to every requisition that did not interfere with the public benefit or security. The garrison were allowed all the honours of war; and, as a particular mark of attention to M. de Bellecombe, the regiment of Pondicherry was, at his request, allowed to keep their colours. A numerous artillery became a prize to the victors; all public property underwent the same fate, but whatever was private was preserved to the owners. The company's troops employed in this siege consisted of ten thousand five hundred men, of whom fifteen hundred were Europeans; the garrison of near three thousand, of whom nine hundred were Europeans. The loss of the British amounted to two hundred and twenty-four slain, and six hundred and ninety-three wounded; and of the garrison to two hundred killed. Mr. Law, who had seen and undergone so many changes of fortune in India, was included in this capitulation, and again beheld the power of his country annihilated in that quarter of the globe. Thus commenced our efforts in British India, in the war against the French.

WHILE our enemy was defeated on the coast of Coromandel, an extensive and powerful confederacy was formed with our European antagonists by the native powers of Hindostan. From the decline of the Mogul empire, the principal state of India within the Ganges, in popu-

Confederacy
 against the
 British interest.

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lation, valour, and resources, was the Mahrattas empire, the original inhabitants of the mountains: hardened by their situation, and secured by their fastnesses and defiles, this warlike nation had continued unsubdued by the successive conquerors of lowland India, and never submitted to a Mahomedan yoke. Deriving a precarious subsistence from pasturage and hunting, these highlanders were accustomed to supply their wants by depredations on the agricultural and fertile country, and hence acquired all the enterprise and activity which result from an incursive and predatory life. Though divided into a variety of tribes, yet deeming themselves sprung from the same origin they acknowledged one paramount superior to all their separate chieftains, and had established a system of connexion and dependence, not unlike the feudal gradations of Europe. At their head was Ram Rajah, the descendant of a celebrated leader. In India, both Mahomedan and Gentoo, the principal offices of state descend by inheritance, and official influence, combining with hereditary power, frequently renders ministers very formidable rivals to their sovereigns. A little before this time, Madur Row, the prime minister, held the reins of government, which his father having with his assistance seized, had at his death left undivided to the son. Both the older and younger usurpers, had exerted considerable ability, and acquired distinguished popularity. This youth's uncle Raganaut Row, treacherously procured his assassination, and being obliged to fly his country, found shelter at Bombay. The refuge afforded to the fugitive greatly incensed the Mahrattas against the English. The presidency of Bombay concluded a treaty with Raganaut, by which they engaged to place him in the official situation recently held by his nephew, while he, on his part, stipulated the cession of extensive territory to the company, and the British from this inducement actually commenced a war.

War with
the Mah-
rattas;

By the treaty of 1769, Hyder Ally had stipulated with the company reciprocal assistance, if either party was attacked: he accordingly engaged in the war against the Mahrattas; but when thus involved, he complained that the presidency of Madras had not furnished him with the promised succours. He indeed was reduced to great

danger, from which having extricated himself with distinguished ability, he concluded a peace with the Mahrattas; and was the more dissatisfied with the presidency of Madras, as he imputed the failure of support, not to negligence but to design. He was aware of the extraordinary influence which the nabob of Arcot possessed in the English council, and not ignorant of the disposition of that prince to embroil him and the company, and therefore began to connect himself with the enemies of Britain. A desultory war was carried on between Bombay and the Mahrattas until October 1774, when three gentlemen arrived in Bengal, who, by the act of 1773, were to be assessors in council to the governor general: these were, general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Philip Francis esquire; and their first act was to urge the presidency of Calcutta to condemn the Mahratta war. The council complied, and sent an ambassador to negotiate a peace: after a variety of discussion, a treaty was concluded at Poonah, on the 13th of March, 1776.

is concluded by the treaty of Poonah.

THE professed objects of the three new counsellors were, peace with the country powers, along with an inviolable observation of the public faith, and a strict attention to justice in all transactions with the natives. The governor at this time was Warren Hastings, a man of lofty genius and acute understanding, of a very comprehensive range, great in his designs, fertile in invention, dexterous in plan, and firm, bold, and rapid in execution. The death of colonel Monson in 1776, and of general Clavering in 1777, left Mr. Francis unsupported in council, and placed Mr. Hastings in a majority. The governor general had been outvoted in the question respecting the peace of Poonah, which was extremely disagreeable to the presidency of Bombay. That body, knowing the resolution that had taken place in the council at Calcutta, began to hope for a revision of the treaty, and the acquirement of much more advantageous terms. The governor general appeared not unwilling to second their wishes: but a variety of complicated considerations produced from Hastings a much grander scheme of policy, and a more extensive system of measures, than the council of Bombay had expected, or even conceived. Hyder Ally, ever since his late peace

Warren Hastings.

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1780.

Hyder Ali
insti-
gates and
forms a
combina-
tion of na-
tive powers
against Bri-
tish India.

Hastings's
grand
scheme
for dissol-
ving the
concert.

with the Mahrattas, had sought the closest connexion with that nation, and by his great political abilities, as well as his high personal character, had acquired powerful influence in their counsels. He had also, with singular zeal, assiduity, and success, paid court to the subah of the Decan: after the Mahrattas and Mysore, the chief native powers in the hither Peninsula, a negotiation was also opened between France, and both Mysore and the Mahrattas. Informed of all these circumstances, and from situation and conduct inferring design, Hastings entertained no doubt that a confederacy was projected against British India: though its specific object might not be hitherto defined, nor its extent ascertained, he had most probable grounds for concluding that a hostile combination was formed against those interests, with the advancement of which he principally was intrusted. He conceived it his duty to employ anticipatory measures, and began with a scheme worthy of his towering genius. As the Mahratta nation would be the most formidable member of the hostile league, he conceived the project of wresting the government of that country from the hands that now held it, and bestowing it on a sovereign, dependent on himself. The deposed Ram Rajah being dead without heirs, one of the pretenders to the Mahratta throne was Moodajee Boosla the rajah of Berer, a considerable principality in the eastern part of the Mahratta empire, and near the British territories. This prince was on amicable terms with the presidency of Calcutta, and at variance with the Nizam and Hyder Ally, its apprehended enemies: he had a great army, unimpaired by war. Raganaut was promised the place of prime minister, when the rajah should be elevated to the throne; and having a considerable number of partisans in his country, was esteemed an important auxiliary. Meanwhile the presidency of Bombay having proposed conditions to the Mahrattas which they would not admit, declared that the treaty of Poonah was violated, and no longer binding on the company. An expedition being undertaken from Bombay, proved unsuccessful by the treachery of Raganaut, and a treaty was concluded at Wargaum, between the presidency of Bombay and the Mahrattas. Meanwhile preparations were making for

elevating the rajah of Berar to the throne ; but at last this prince himself refused to have any concern in the undertaking, and was gained over by Hyder Ally to take a part in the confederacy against the English. In 1779, a formal league was concluded between the four chief native powers against England ; and to this the inferior princes soon afterwards acceded. From Delhi to cape Comorin, from the Indus to the coast of Coromandel, all except Arcot was hostile to the English name. The first object of attack was the Carnatic, which expedition Hyder Ally undertook to conduct ; but as military operations did not begin till the latter end of the year 1780, not to break the unity of that portion of history, I must reserve the narrative of those transactions until I can carry them to a more advanced period.

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XXV.

1780.

Prepara-
tions of
Hyder Ally
to invade the
Carnatic.

THE naval campaign of 1780 opened honourably and advantageously for Britain. Gibraltar having been closely blockaded by the Spaniards, the relief of that important fortress was intrusted to admiral Rodney, an officer highly distinguished for intrepidity, nautical skill, and naval conduct : in his plans and execution he eminently displayed a boldness of adventure, that befitted a leader of Britons, who neither feared the dangers of the sea nor the enemy, and introduced a system of tactics the best suited to the men he had to command. Having sailed at mid-winter, he had been but a short time at sea when he fell in with a considerable convoy, bound from St. Sebastian to Cadiz, consisting of fifteen merchant ships, guarded by a sixty-four gun ship, four frigates, and two sloops : the whole fleet was taken. The ship of war, and some trading vessels laden with bale goods and naval stores, he sent to England ; the rest, whose cargoes were flour, he took with him to Gibraltar. Proceeding in his voyage, on the 15th of January, he descried, off cape St. Vincents a Spanish squadron of eleven ships of the line, under the command of don Juan de Langara. The wind blowing towards the shore, the British admiral, on perceiving the enemy, immediately kept to leeward in order to prevent them from escaping into their ports, favoured by the shortness of the day. The Spaniards in vain endeavoured to avoid a conflict. About four o'clock in the afternoon the English fire commencing with

Europe.

Admiral
Rodney

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1780.

vindicates
the naval
glory of
England
by a signal
victory
over the
Spanish
fleet.

the usual energy and rapidity, was returned with spirit and resolution by the Spaniards. The battle was obstinately fought: the night soon arriving, was dark, tempestuous, and dismal, and its aspect was rendered more terrible to the British fleet, from being involved among the shoals of St. Lucar, in endeavouring to intercept the enemy from attaining the shore: but these difficulties and dangers only stimulated their courage, and invigorated their efforts. The Spanish ship St. Domingo of seventy guns, with six hundred men blew up, and all on board perished. The English man of war with which she was engaged, narrowly escaped a similar fate. The action and pursuit continued with a constant fire until two o'clock in the morning, when the headmost of the enemy's line struck to the admiral.

THE Spanish admiral's ship, the Phoenix of eighty guns, with three of seventy, were taken and carried safely into port; the St. Julian of seventy guns, commanded by the Marquis de Medina, was taken, the officers shifted, and a lieutenant, with seventy British seamen, put on board; but by her running on shore, the victors experienced the caprice of war, by becoming themselves prisoners. Another ship of the same force was afterwards run upon the breakers, and totally lost; two more escaped greatly damaged, and two less injured were sent into Cadiz. Such was the final disposal of the whole Spanish squadron. Notwithstanding the inferiority of the enemy in point of force, yet, as the British admiral had to encounter a boisterous ocean, during the storms of mid-winter, and gloomy darkness, with the additional danger of a lee shore, few actions have required a higher degree of intrepidity, more consummate naval skill, or greater dexterity of seamanship.

Important
effects of
this battle,

relieves
Gibraltar.

THIS was a very important victory; besides the great damage sustained by the enemy, six ships of the line were added to the royal navy of England; and the value of other prizes, in a public view, was greatly enhanced by the nature of their cargoes, the critical season in which they were taken, and the essential service to which they were applied. The victorious admiral proceeded to Gibraltar, furnished the garrison with necessary supplies, sent also stores and provisions to Minorca, and with part of

his fleet set sail for the West Indies; the rest returned with the Spanish prizes to England, under admiral Digby, who in his way captured a French ship of sixty-four guns, one of a convoy to a fleet of transports destined for Mauritius. The success of admiral Rodney caused great joy in the nation, for some time disused to tidings of victory: besides the signal advantage obtained, they considered it as the general restoration of naval supremacy; and the discomfiture of the Spanish fleet off St. Vincents, had a powerful effect on the operations in other scenes of naval hostility.

SIR CHARLES HARDY having died in May, the command of the channel fleet was bestowed on admiral Geary, who sailed in the beginning of June. The enemy did not attempt to face our armament, but left their trade exposed to the British cruisers. In the beginning of July, the admiral fell in with a rich fleet of merchantmen from St. Domingo, and took twelve of the number; the rest escaped through a thick fog. After cruising for several weeks longer that commander returned into harbour, resigned the command, and was succeeded by admiral Darby. Meanwhile the British commerce received a severe blow: an outward-bound fleet of merchantmen for the East and West Indies sailed from Portsmouth, under the convoy of captain Moutray of the *Ramillies*, and three frigates. The Spanish fleet, joined by a squadron of French, was cruising off the coast of Spain and Portugal, without venturing to the northward of cape Finisterre. The convoy included, besides the merchantmen, eighteen victuallers, storeships, and transports, destined for the service of the West Indies. One of these was of particular importance, being laden with tents and camp equipage for the troops that were designed for active service in the Leeward-Islands: the five Indiamen likewise, besides arms, ammunition, and a train of artillery, conveyed a large quantity of naval stores for the supply of the British squadron in the east. The convoy took a course much nearer the enemy's coast than was usual, or at least expedient. On the 9th of August it met with the enemy's fleet, and most of the merchantmen were captured. This loss caused great dejection among commercial men, and

Capture of
the out-
ward-
bound mer-
chantmen.

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1780.

The admiralty is severely blamed.

increased the dissatisfaction which had before prevailed against ministry. It was alleged by the friends of administration, that the convoy had pursued that track in order to accommodate the merchants and the East India company, who were taking in wines at Madeira : but it was replied, that the accommodation of the merchants was not a sufficient reason for touching at that island, with such danger of interception ; that a course so near the enemy's coast was not necessary in order to steer to Madeira : and that if so easterly a track had been unavoidable, the convoy of such an immense property ought, instead of a single man of war and three frigates, to have been the whole channel fleet. Admiral Darby having been detained by contrary winds at Torbay, put to sea about the middle of September, and steered to the coast of Spain. Count de Guichen was ordered with a squadron to reinforce the fleet in the West Indies, but finding his ships in a very indifferent condition, and being informed that the English fleet had sailed, he resolved for safety to join the combined armament off Cadiz. The French fleet, commanded by D'Estaing, being thus reinforced, consisted of thirty-six sail of the line, which undertook to conduct the West India-convoy to the ports of France. Don Louis de Cordova, the Spanish admiral, accompanied the French as far as cape Finisterre. After their separation from the Spaniards, the French fleet descried admiral Darby, on the 7th of November, with twenty-two ships of the line, and two ships of fifty guns. D'Estaing, notwithstanding the great superiority of his numbers, being incumbered by the convoy, and aware of the bad condition of his ships, did not choose to hazard an engagement. Darby, on the other hand, observing the vast superiority of number on the side of the enemy, did not think it expedient to venture a battle. Ministers conceived that in the relative circumstances the most decisive advantages must have ensued, and without imputing any blame to the admiral, expressed their regret that he had not attacked the enemy. Darby, in the end of November, returned into port.

America.

THE campaign both in America and the West Indies was much more active and important than in Europe. In the former year, the arrival of D'Estaing with the French

force on the American coast had turned the attention of sir Henry Clinton chiefly to defence ; but the defeat and departure of that enemy, with the brilliant achievements and important successes of British detachments, encouraged him to hope for proportionate advantage from a comprehensive scheme of offensive operations to be carried on by his main army. He accordingly, in the close of 1779, made dispositions for invading South Carolina and besieging Charleston : with this view, leaving general Knyp- hausen to command at New York, he, on the 26th of December, sailed from Sandy hook, escorted by admiral Arbuthnot, and directed his course to Savannah ; where, from the stormy season, he did not arrive until the end of January. The ships being considerably damaged, he deferred his expedition for about twelve days, that they might be refitted.

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1780.

CHARLESTON, the capital of South Carolina, is situated between the rivers Ashley and Cooper to the north and south, with a harbour formed by the conflux of those streams, and an inlet of the sea to the east ; communicating to the west with the main land by an isthmus between the two rivers, called Charleston Neck, by which only the town can be approached by land. To these natural constituents of security, art and skill were not wanting. The fortifications had been considerably strengthened in 1776, to oppose sir Peter Parker : but chiefly on the side next the sea, whence the attacks had been directed. The Americans, being now informed of the movements and force of the British arms, and aware that the town would be attempted on the side of the land, comprehended that quarter in their scheme of defence. They constructed a chain of redoubts, lines, and batteries, extending from Ashley to Cooper river, upon which were mounted upwards of eighty pieces of cannon and mortars. In front of the lines a canal had been dug, which was filled with water, and from the dam at both ends a swamp oozed to each river, forming natural impediments where the artificial terminated. Behind these were two rows of abbattis, some other obstructions, and immediately in front of the works a double picketed ditch. The fortifications on the right and left were not only strong, but advanced so far beyond

Expedition
against
Charleston
by sir
Henry
Clinton.

Strength of
that place,
natural and
artificial.

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1780.

the range of the intermediate lines, as to enfilade the canal almost from one end to the other. In the centre there was a hornwork of masonry, which being closed during the siege, became a citadel.

SUCH were the defences of Charleston, on the only side on which it could be approached by land ; and towards the water, numerous batteries covered with artillery forbade the approach of ships. But besides the security which Charleston derived from its numerous batteries, it was still more effectually protected by the bar or sand-bank at the mouth of the inlet from the sea. This bar, impassable by the larger ships of war, rendered the entry of others difficult and dangerous ; and just within it, a five fathom hole, of a sufficient depth of water, furnished a convenient station for a squadron to command the bar, and further obstruct the besiegers. This station was occupied by the American commodore Whipple, with a squadron of nine sail under his command, the largest carrying forty-four, and the smallest sixteen guns. After the perils and difficulties of the bar were surmounted, before a fleet could reach Charleston, fort Moultrie upon Sullivan's island was to be passed, the fire from which had, on a former occasion, proved so destructive to a British squadron ; and since that period, the works had been considerably strengthened and enlarged. General Lincoln trusting to those defences, and at the same time expecting large reinforcements from the other colonies, shut himself up in Charleston at the earnest request of the inhabitants ; and with the force under his command, amounting to seven thousand men of all denominations under arms, resolved to defend it to the last extremity. On the 11th of February the fleet sailed, and took possession without opposition of the islands of St. John and of James to the southward of Charleston harbour, while the army advanced across the country to the bank of Ashley river. Being at great pains to fortify posts, and preserve his communication with the sea, Clinton did not attempt to pass the Ashley until the 29th of March. This operation, in itself very difficult, was effected with expedition and success, through the skill and activity of captain Keith Elphinstone, who conducted the passage of the

troops with distinguished address and ability. Having disembarked on the northern shore of Ashley, the army the following day encamped in front of the American line ; and on the 1st of April, began to break ground before Charleston, at the distance of eight hundred yards from the provincial works. Meanwhile the British fleet approached the bar, in order to second the operations of the army. For this purpose admiral Arbuthnot shifted his flag from the *Europa* of the line, to the *Roebuck* of forty-four guns, which, with the *Renown* and *Ramillies*, were lightened of their guns, provisions, and water ; the lighter frigates being capable of passing the bar without such preparation. Yet so difficult was the task in any state, that they lay in that situation, exposed on an open coast in the winter season to the danger of the seas and to the insults of the enemy, for above a fortnight before a proper opportunity offered : the bar was, however, passed on the 20th of March, without loss.

THE American commodore retired to Charleston ; the British ships embraced the first opportunity for passing fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island, and notwithstanding a severe and impetuous fire, made good the way. Still the Americans had preserved the command of the Cooper river. General Clinton having now ascertained the co-operation of the fleet, and completed his first parallel, before he opened his batteries sent a summons to the American general to surrender. Lincoln, trusting to the strength of the place, and to the supplies and reinforcements, which he might still receive by the Cooper, refused to yield ; and to render the entrance of that river impracticable, ordered a chain of vessels to be sunk across its mouth. On the 9th of April, the British batteries opened, with visible effect. Meanwhile a force was detached under lord Cornwallis, in order to possess the other side of the Cooper river ; and his lordship, assisted by the enterprising activity of colonels Webster and Tarleton, and major Fergusson, soon cut off all communication between the garrison of Charleston and any part of the country. Completely invested, the Americans offered conditions of capitulation ; which being much too favourable for the present state, were instantly rejected by the British com-

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1780.

Charleston
reduced.

mander. Major Moncrieff, who had gained so much honour in the defence of Savannah, acquired no less applause from the very superior and masterly manner in which he conducted the offensive operations of the siege. The second parallel was completed on the 19th of April, and the third on the 6th of May. The last of these had been pushed so near to the provincial works, as to be close to the canal; and the canal, for a considerable part of its extent, was quickly drained of its water. On the same day, colonel Tarleton attacked and defeated another body of cavalry, which the enemy had with infinite difficulty collected together. The admiral, who had constantly pressed and annoyed the enemy, received information which induced him to attack fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island; he therefore despatched captain Hudson of the navy, with two hundred seamen and marines, to attack the fort by land, while he with the ships should batter it by water; but before the battery was opened, the garrison surrendered. After this advantage, general Clinton, wishing to preserve Charleston from the dreadful effects of a capture by storm, again urged the American general by capitulation to avert destruction; but the provincials not being sufficiently humbled by their misfortunes, still refused to comply. The hostilities were recommenced: the batteries on the third parallel were then opened, and so great a superiority of fire obtained, that the besiegers were enabled to gain the counterscarps of the outwork which flanked the canal: this they likewise passed, and then pushed on their works directly towards the ditch. General Lincoln and the inhabitants, seeing that farther resistance would be ineffectual, offered to surrender. The British commanders were not disposed to press to unconditional submission, an enemy whom they wished to conciliate by clemency; they therefore granted now the same conditions which they had before offered, and the capitulation was accordingly signed. The garrison was allowed some of the honours of war, but neither to uncase their colours, nor beat a British march on their drums. The continental troops and seamen were to keep their baggage, and remain prisoners of war until they were exchanged. The militia were permitted to return to their respective houses, as

prisoners on parole ; and while they adhered to their engagement, were not to be molested by the British troops : and the citizens were allowed the same terms as the militia. The loss of the royalists at the siege of Charleston amounted to seventy-six killed, and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded. Of the garrison, the number of the killed and wounded was smaller. The prisoners were, the deputy governor and the council of the province, seven general officers, a commodore, ten continental regiments, but much reduced, three battallions of artillery, with town and country militia; amounting to more than five thousand men ; to whom must be added about one thousand American and French seamen, and near four hundred pieces of ordnance, with a considerable quantity of stores. The commander in chief bestowed the highest encomiums on the officers and privates in the various departments of service. The officers most particularly specified were, earl Cornwallis, major generals Leslie, Hayne, and Kosputch, and brigadier general Patterson ; lieutenant colonels Webster and Tarleton, major Fergusson, and major Moncrieff of the engineers in the land service ; and captain Keith Elphinstone in the navy.

In the sanguine hopes that spring from unusual success, sir Henry Clinton considered the reduction of Charleston as the completion of the conquest of South Carolina, and a prelude to the speedy recovery of the southern colonies. He expected, indeed, that the provincials themselves would now effectually cooperate in the reestablishment of their former connexion with the mother country. Great numbers flocked to Charleston from all parts of Carolina, to pay their court to the conquerors, and offer their services in support of his majesty's government. The general, with exulting joy, transmitted to the American minister these professions, and attributed to the affection of loyalty, what penetration might have discovered, and experience soon ascertained to be, in most instances, the dissimulation of policy, or the extorted homage of fear. Confident that his projects could be accomplished by a part of his army, he left a division for that purpose under lord Cornwallis, and returned with the rest to New York. Before Clinton's departure, Corn-

The province of South Carolina yields to the British arms.

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1780.

Leaving
the go-
vernment
of Carolina
to lord
Cornwal-
lis, Clinton
returns to
New York.

Wise ad-
ministra-
tion of his
lordship.

wallis had been employed to drive out of the province a body of continental troops under colonel Burford, who arriving too late to throw succours into Charlestown, had posted himself on the northern banks of the Santee. Here being joined by those of the American cavalry who had survived their last defeat by Tarleton, he made a show of opposition to the British interest, and endeavoured to keep alive the expiring hopes of the provincials. On the 18th of May earl Cornwallis began the pursuit, and on the 1st of June he overtook the enemy, and gained a complete victory. Of the Americans one hundred and thirteen were killed, and two hundred and three taken prisoners, of whom one hundred and fifty were wounded: Burford made his escape on horseback.

THE American force being entirely driven from South Carolina, his lordship directed his attention to the internal administration of the province; while he was also making dispositions for marching into North Carolina, as soon as the heat should be abated, and the harvest being finished should enable him to form magazines for subsisting his troops. He established a board of police for the administration of justice, until the state of the province should admit of the regular reestablishment of its former civil government. He made commercial arrangements for permitting the inhabitants to export the produce of their country, enrolled the militia for assisting in defending the colony, and brought the country to a state of tranquillity and order; but these pleasing appearances had no long duration. Of the persons attached to the American cause, who since the capture of Charleston had submitted to the British government, either by taking the oath of allegiance, or obtaining a parole, some were influenced by the ruinous appearance of American affairs, the despair of ultimate success, and a wish to save the remains of their property that had escaped the ravages and devastations of war; and others were determined by the fear of punishment. The congress and Washington, well acquainted with the fallacy of the loyal professions, and with the real dispositions of a great majority in South Carolina, resolved to send a detachment of the grand army to their assistance. The exertions of Virginia and North Caro-

lina greatly increased the destined force; and general Gates with a considerable army advanced to the southern provinces.

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INFORMED that the American general was marching towards Camden, lord Cornwallis was compelled to leave the civil arrangements, in which he had been so meritoriously and beneficially engaged, and to resume military operations. On the 10th of August he set out, with fifteen hundred regular troops and five hundred militia; on his march he was informed that Gates with near six thousand men had already entered the province. On the 15th, the armies came in sight of each other at Camden: both generals ordered their troops to halt and form; but it being very late in the evening, they did not engage till the next morning. Lord Cornwallis was posted on ground particularly advantageous to inferior numbers; a swamp on each side secured his army from being flanked, and narrowed the ground in front, so as to render the whole multitude of the enemy unable to act. At the dawn of the 16th, he made his last disposition for battle. His front line was drawn up in two divisions, of which the right was commanded by colonel Webster, and the left was headed by lord Rawdon.* A second line was formed for a reserve, and in the rear the cavalry were disposed, being ready either to charge or pursue, as circumstances might require. The artillery was divided between the two lines, to second and support their respective efforts: the Americans formed their troops also into two lines. The opposite armies being thus marshalled, colonel Webster and lord Rawdon began the charge with such impetuosity as quickly to throw the provincial line into confusion; rallying, however, they made a very gallant resistance, and the second British line advancing, the enemy were entirely broken, and the cavalry completed their route.

1780.
He is obliged to take the field against general Gates.

Battle of Camden.

Victory of the British troops.

* This young nobleman, the eldest son of the earl of Moira, who possessed the advantages of high birth and ample fortune, accomplishments to grace the court, abilities to inform the cabinet, to convince and delight the senate, with taste and learning to charm and instruct the polished and literary circles of the metropolis, or to enjoy the calm recesses of rural life; when his country's cause was at stake, sacrificed ease, however elegant, refined, or rationally employed, to the generous love of glory, and the imperious duties of patriotism: combined genius and heroism soon raised him to high command.

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1780.

Achievements of
colonel
Tarleton.

THE judgment of the general in planning, his promptitude in executing, and his coolness and self-possession during the whole of the engagement, were the themes of universal admiration and applause. The victory was decisive; the broken and scattered enemy were pursued as far as Hanging Rock, about twenty miles from the field of battle; all their artillery, amounting to seven or eight brass fieldpieces, with two thousand stand of arms, and their military wagons, were taken; about nine hundred were killed, and a thousand captured; the general baron de Kall, second in command, was mortally wounded and made prisoner. Lord Cornwallis had no sooner overthrown the enemy, than he prepared to render his success as beneficial as possible to the cause. Sumpter, an American general, had annoyed the royalists, by cutting off or capturing detached parties, and intercepting convoys. The British commander, with great prudence, resolved, before he pursued his victory by marching into North Carolina, to rid the southern province of this troublesome enemy; he accordingly, on the very evening of the battle of Camden, gave directions to that gallant and enterprising officer colonel Tarleton, to attempt the interception of Sumpter. The American commander, as soon as he heard of the fate of his countrymen, retreated with great despatch, and having proceeded so far as to apprehend no danger of being overtaken, he halted to refresh his fatigued troops. Tarleton having received his general's orders, executed them with the utmost quickness: on the 10th of August he came up with the Americans, and before they had time to assemble, entered their camp, and cut them off from their arms and artillery. Being thus surprised, the provincials were all killed, taken, or dispersed, and the whole of their stores, ammunition, baggage, artillery, and one thousand stand of arms, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

THE discomfiture of general Gates's army, and the defeat and dispersion of Sumpter's corps so soon after, crushed the provincial force in the south: lord Cornwallis now waited only for supplies from Charleston, before he proceeded to North Carolina. Until provisions for the army arrived, he resumed the consideration of civil affairs.

Finding that many of the Americans, after swearing allegiance to the British government, on the approach of Gates had revolted, he thought it prudent and necessary to restrain perfidy, and prevent future defection, by wholesome severity towards the most active and forward in treachery and violation of their oaths. The estates of all who after having professed obedience to Great Britain had joined the enemy, were sequestered; but in this confiscation, separating their innocent families from the traitorous delinquents, he allowed from the property a liberal proportion for the maintenance of their wives and children. Instant death was denounced against those who, after having taken protections from the British government should be found in arms for the Americans. On the 8th of September, his lordship marched towards North Carolina, and as he passed through the most populous and hostile parts of the province, he sent colonel Tarleton and major Fergusson to scour the country to his right and left. Having arrived at Charlotteburgh, and judging that place from its intermediate position between Camden and Salisbury, a favourable situation for farther advances, he prepared to establish a post.

WHILE he was making the proper dispositions for this purpose, the commanders of his detachments were proceeding in their respective expeditions. Of these the most signal in its efforts, though fatal in its event, was the last enterprise of the gallant and meritorious Fergusson. This gentleman had already displayed that combination of intrepid heroism, inventive genius, and sound judgment, which constitute the valiant soldier and the able commander. The son of an eminent Scottish judge,^f and nephew of a nobleman^g of great literary talents, he sought fame by a different direction of equally vigorous and brilliant powers. In early youth he entered the army, and while a subaltern of eighteen, in the German war was distinguished by a courage as cool as it was determined, his principal object being to become beneficial by profes-

Account of
major Fer-
gusson.

^f James Fergusson of Pitfour, lord of session and justiciary.

^g Patrick Murray, lord Elibank, deemed by Robertson, Fergusson, Hume, and cotemporary sages, in genius and erudition equal to the authors of the Scottish Augustan age.

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sional skill and effort. The interval of peace he employed; by improving himself in military knowledge and science. When the disputes between Britain and her colonies was verging to a civil war, the boasted skill of the Americans in the use of the rifle was exhibited as an object of terror to the British troops. These rumours operated on the genius of Fergusson, and his invention produced a new species of the rifle, which he could load at the breech without using the rammer, or turning the muzzle away from the enemy, and with such quickness of repetition as to fire seven times in a minute. The riflemen might meanwhile be prostrate on the ground, and protected from the shot of the enemy by the smallest eminence, either natural or artificial. Fergusson displayed his contrivance to the satisfaction of lord Townshend, master of the ordnance, and other military men. When the war commenced, his regiment not being ordered for warlike service, he was extremely anxious to be actively employed for his king and country. He was accordingly introduced to the commander in chief, and appointed to command a corps drafted from regular regiments, and to discipline them for the practice of his new invention. At the battle of Brandywine he presented the first specimen of the use of his riflemen,^h and obtained great praise for his skill and successful efforts. In the following year, he was employed in several of the detached expeditions, which unimportant as they proved in result, yet as we have seen called forth a great degree of British valour and ability; and particularly distinguished himself in the incursive war on the North River, in 1779. Fergusson being engaged in the expedition to Charleston, was of very signal importance to the besieging army, and is mentioned with great praises by sir Henry Clinton.ⁱ After the reduction of that place, when Cornwallis was attempting by justice and mildness to restore harmony between the province and the mother country, he called for the assistance of Fergusson. To the valour, enterprise, and invention which were so important in war, Fergusson was known to add the benignant dispositions and conciliating manners which generate good

^h See account of the battle of Brandywine, this volume, chap. xix.

ⁱ See this volume, p. 299.

will and cement friendship in situations of peace. Among the propositions of Cornwallis for the security and tranquillity of the recovered colony, one scheme was to arm the well affected for their own defence. Fergusson, now a lieutenant colonel in America, was intrusted with the charge of marshalling the militia throughout a wide extent of country. Under his direction and conduct a militia at once numerous and select was enrolled and disciplined. One of the great tests of clearness and vigour of understanding, is ready classification, either of things or men, according to the qualities which they possess and the purposes that they are fitted or intended to answer. Fergusson exercised his genius in devising a summary of the ordinary tactics and manual exercises, for the use of the militia: he had them divided in every district into two classes; one, of the young men, the single and unmarried, who should be ready to join the king's troops to repel any enemy that infested the province; another, of the aged and heads of families, who should be ready to unite in defending their own towns, ships, habitations, and farms. In this progress among them, he soon gained their confidence, by the attention which he paid to the interests of the well affected, and even by his humanity to the families of those who were in arms against him. "We came not," he said, "to make war on women and children;" and gave them money to relieve their distresses. The movements of the Americans having compelled Cornwallis to proceed with great caution in his northern expedition, the genius and rapid efforts of Fergusson were required for protecting and facilitating the march of the army, and a plan of collateral operations was devised for that purpose. In the execution of their schemes, he had advanced as far as Ninety-six, about two hundred miles from Charleston; and with his usual vigour and success was acting against different bodies of the colonists that still disputed the possession of the country, when intelligence arrived from colonel Brown, commander of the king's forces in Upper Georgia, that a corps of rebels under colonel Clarke had made an attempt upon Augusta, and being repulsed was retreating by the back settlements of Carolina. To this information colonel

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Brown added, that he himself meant to hang on the rear of the enemy, and that if Fergusson would cut across his route, he might be intercepted, and his party dispersed. This service seemed to be perfectly consistent with the purpose of his expedition, and did not give time to wait for fresh orders from lord Cornwallis ; Fergusson yielded to his usual ardour, and pushed with his detachment, composed of a few regulars and militia, into Tryon county. In the mean time, numerous bodies of back settlers west of the Allegany mountains were in arms, some of them intending to seize upon the presents intended for the Creek and Cherokee Indians, which they understood were but slightly guarded at Augusta ; others had assembled, upon the alarm of enemies likely to visit them from South Carolina. These meeting with colonel Clarke, secured his retreat, and made it expedient for Brown to desist from his pursuit, and return to his station at Augusta ; while Fergusson, having no intelligence of Brown's retreat, still continued the march, which was undertaken at his request. As he was continuing his route, a numerous, fierce, and unexpected enemy suddenly sprung up in the woods and wilds. The inhabitants of the Allegany mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of sixteen hundred daring, well mounted, and excellent horsemen. Discovering these enemies as he crossed King's Mountain, Fergusson took the best position for receiving them that the ground would permit. But his men, neither covered by horse nor artillery, and being likewise dismayed and astonished at finding themselves so unexpectedly surrounded and attacked on every side by the cavalry of the mountains, were not capable of withstanding the impetuosity of their charge. Already a hundred and fifty of his soldiers were killed upon the spot, and a greater number was wounded. Still, however, the unconquerable spirit of this gallant officer refused to surrender. He repulsed a succession of attacks from every quarter until he received a mortal wound. By the fall of major Fergusson, his men were entirely disheartened : animated by his brave example, they had hitherto preserved their courage under all disadvantages. In the resour-

ces of his fertile genius they deservedly placed the utmost confidence, and with him perished every hope of success. Under such circumstances, the second in command, judging all further resistance to be vain, offered to surrender, and sued for quarter.

From the ability and exertions of colonel Fergusson, very great advantages had been expected; and had he not been surprised and cut off, there is no doubt that every expectation would have been fully gratified. By his unfortunate fall, and the slaughter, captivity, or dispersion of his whole corps, the plan of the expedition into North Carolina was entirely deranged. The western frontiers of South Carolina were now exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, and it became necessary for lord Cornwallis to fall back for their protection, and wait for a reinforcement before he could proceed farther upon his expedition. On the 14th of October he began his march to South Carolina: his lordship and his army met with very great difficulties and hardships; their provisions were so nearly exhausted that the soldiers were limited as to quantity, with hardly any means of cooking;^k the country was overflowed with incessant rains, they had no tents, and could rarely find a dry spot to kindle a fire; but the soldiers bore their hardships without repining, as they knew their officers and generals fared no better than themselves. His lordship himself was taken ill: but nevertheless preserved his vigour of mind, and arrived on the 29th of October with his army at Wymesborough, to wait for fresh reinforcements from sir Henry Clinton. Meanwhile the mountaineers had dispersed, but the northeast part of the province was infested by the depredations of an enterprising partisan of the name of Marion.

In the northern part of America, operations and events were of much less importance, than in the south. The force left for the security of New York, appeared adequate to the defence of that city at the departure of Clinton; but the extraordinary rigour of the winter soon after exposed the British garrison to an unforeseen danger. One of the chief causes of the safety of New York was its

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New York.

^k Stedman, vol. ii. p. 229.

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insulated situation, which gave full effect to our naval superiority. The uncommon intenseness of the frost during the winter of 1779-80, deprived it of this protection. By the middle of January, the North River was so completely covered with thick ice, that the largest army, with the heaviest artillery and baggage, might have passed on it with ease. In other quarters, towards the country, New York was no less accessible, whilst its communication with the sea was entirely cut off. In this perilous situation, the veteran general Knyphausen took such precautionary measures as prudence dictated; the seamen were landed from the ships and transports, and formed into companies; the inhabitants were embodied, officered, and took their routine of duty with the regular garrison. They were deprived of those supplies which a communication by water would have afforded, and in particular suffered so severely for want of fuel, that it became necessary to break up some old transports, and to pull down some uninhabited wooden houses, to supply their present necessities. Fortunately for the British garrison, Washington's army was in no condition to profit by the accessibility of New York; it had been greatly weakened by detachments that were sent to the relief of Charleston, was in extreme want of provisions and other necessaries, and from that cause seized with the spirit of discontent almost arising to mutiny. No attempt was made on the British garrison, except to straighten its quarters, and to intercept convoys. In February, major Matthews having defeated a party of Americans posted at King's Bridge to interrupt the communication of the garrison with the country, opened the way for more liberal supplies. The spring advanced, and thawing the ice, restored New York to its insular situation; and the British commander, exempted from the necessity of attending to defence, made dispositions for offensive measures. Informed of the prevalence of a mutinous spirit in the American army, and imputing to disaffection what really arose from distress, on that supposition hoping for the cooperation of the Americans, he attempted to establish the royal standard in the Jerseys; but he soon found that the American soldiers, though they repined at their difficulties, persevered in their inveteracy;

and finding that, opposed by the provincials, his troops could obtain no footing in that country, he recalled them to New York. Such was the state of affairs when general Clinton returned from Charleston, on the 23d of June. General Washington, expecting the speedy arrival of a French armament, confined his operations to desultory and detached excursions. On the 10th of July, the expected reinforcement reached Rhode Island: it consisted of seven ships of the line, some frigates, and a great number of transports, having on board six thousand troops. The fleet was commanded by De Ternay, and the troops by Rochambeau: in order to prevent discussions of rank in command, and to obviate every difficulty that might arise from the junction of the French troops with the American army, a commission was sent to general Washington, appointing him a lieutenant general of France, and commander of the forces now sent. So powerful a reinforcement revived the drooping spirits of the Americans, and invigorated their exertions to recruit their own army. The French squadron being superior to that of Arbuthnot, the British commander thought it prudent to act on the defensive; but six ships of the line arriving from England, they prepared for an expedition to Rhode Island, in order to act offensively against the French. Meanwhile Washington having his army strongly reinforced, hastened across the North River, and approached King's Bridge. So unexpected a movement obliged sir Henry Clinton to abandon the expedition against Rhode Island, and return with the troops for the protection of New York, leaving admiral Arbuthnot to block up the French fleet at sea. Washington expected the count de Guichen with a fleet of twenty ships of the line from the West Indies, and entertained sanguine hopes that the whole combined force would overpower Clinton and Arbuthnot, and wrest New York from the hands of the British: to concert measures for this design, he left his army, and repaired to the French commanders at Rhode Island.

WHILE Washington was absent for this purpose, a scheme was formed for delivering to sir Henry Clinton the strong post of West Point in the highlands upon the North River, the possession of which would have nearly

Defection
of general
Arnold.

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cut off all communication between the northern and middle colonies. The author of this project was the celebrated general Arnold. This officer, after the campaign in the Jerseys, had been appointed commander of the American garrison that occupied Philadelphia: there he had lived so luxuriously and splendidly, as to disgust the quakers, who were the principal inhabitants of that city, and to displease the congress, by a conduct so totally inconsistent with the austerity of republicans beset with danger; he lived also so profusely as far to outgo his stated income. To supply his deficiencies he took shares in privateers, and embarked in other speculations; but his various projects proved unsuccessful. He made considerable claims on the public; but when his accounts were examined by commissioners, a great part of his demand was refused. He appealed to the congress, which gave judgment that the inspectors of his claims had allowed him too much. Seeing the embarrassment of his affairs, his creditors became extremely importunate. Such a situation galled the proud and irritable temper of Arnold; who, giving vent to his resentment, and recapitulating his services, complained in strong and indignant terms of the ingratitude of congress. Provoked at the freedom and severity of his expostulation, that body appointed a court martial, to examine into his conduct as commander of Philadelphia. He was sentenced to a general reprobation, and also a reprimand from Washington, whom he deemed his personal enemy. From this time Arnold appears to have formed a design of betraying the interests which he professed to support, and joining the British; but to have suspended the execution until an opportunity should offer, of materially injuring the cause which he was about to desert, and serving the power he was about to join. The interval of Washington's absence appeared to him a favourable opportunity for delivering an important post to Clinton. He accordingly opened a correspondence with the British general; and as he required a confidential agent to be sent, major André, aid-du-camp to sir Henry Clinton, and adjutant general of the British army, undertook to confer with him, and bring the negotiation to a conclusion. This was a gentleman of very great merit, and rising fast to a high character

in the army. Though open and honourable, yet sensible that, in war, stratagem is no less necessary than military prowess, he could find nothing in the employment assigned him which was inconsistent with the character of a gallant soldier. Perceiving that very momentous advantage might result to his country from the success of the scheme, he was by loyalty and patriotism stimulated to undertake its execution. Able and ingenious, he was conscious that he was well fitted to promote its success. The Vulture sloop of war had been stationed so near general Arnold's post, as to facilitate private communication without exciting suspicion. On the 21st of September, André went on board the sloop, and was at night conveyed in a boat to the beach without the lines, where he met with general Arnold. Day-light approaching before the business was finally adjusted, André was told that it would be necessary to conduct him to a safe place, where he should lie concealed during the day, and return at night on board the sloop. The retreat to which he was brought was, against his intentions and without his knowledge, within the American lines. Here Arnold delivered to him various papers concerning the state of the forces, and other matters, for the information of Clinton, to show that general the most expeditious and effectual means of getting the American army into his power. The outlines of the project were, that Arnold should make such a disposition of the wing of the army under his command, as would enable sir Henry Clinton completely to surprise their strong posts and batteries, and throw the troops so entirely into his hands, that they must inevitably either lay down their arms, or be cut to pieces. Besides the immediate possession of these strong holds, and the cutting off so great a part of the enemy's best force without loss or difficulty, the consequences would have reached much farther, for the remainder of Washington's army would then have been laid open in such a manner to the joint exertion of the British forces by land and water, that nothing less than slaughter, dispersion, and final ruin, could have been the result. With respect to the Americans, such a stroke; it was conceived, could not have been recovered: independent of the loss of artillery, magazines, and stores, a de-

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Character,
enterprise
and fate of
major
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struction of their whole disciplined force, and of most if not all of their best officers, must have been immediately fatal. While André was with Arnold, the Vulture had shifted her position, in consequence of an attack from some artillery on shore, and was gone down nearer to New York; thence it being impracticable for André to return in the same way that he had come, he was obliged to proceed by land. Involved in such circumstances without any fault of his own, necessity compelled him to employ deception for his extrication. Hitherto he had worn his regimentals; now dressing himself in a plain suit, he received a passport, under the name of John Anderson, by which he on horseback passed the outposts. Conceiving himself in perfect safety, he was well advanced on his return, when three militia men meeting him on the road, suddenly seized the bridle, and interrogated him whence he came. Confused at an unexpected encounter, he answered *from below*: he immediately recollected his mistake, but too late; the suspicions of his interrogators were roused, and they insisted on searching him. He offered his purse and watch, and promised very high rewards if they would suffer him to depart; but all was unavailing. The generous André, now regardless of his own fate, had no anxiety but to save Arnold from the certain destruction that awaited him when the contents of the papers should be made known to the Americans. This object he effected by a dexterous stratagem: producing his passport from that general, he desired that he might be informed of his seizure, and that he himself should be detained in custody until Arnold's orders were known. The captors complying with this request, a message was sent to Arnold, which, announcing the detention of John Anderson, induced him, as André desired and expected, to seek safety by flight. He escaped, got on board the Vulture, and repaired to New York. André being informed that Arnold was out of reach of the Americans, avowed himself under his proper name and character. Washington having now returned, André wrote to him, detailing the circumstances of the case. Disregarding every danger, his only concern was to prove that he had conducted himself as became a man of honour, and had no intention to be within

the American lines, nor to act as a spy; that he was merely the agent of a negotiation, in which neither he nor his employer had practised treachery, or done any thing inconsistent with the laws of war. He had gone upon public business under a flag of truce, dressed in his uniform, to confer with the commander of that post; and had, without his knowledge, been brought within the American lines. His subsequent disguise had been the result of necessity, not of choice. Washington appointed a board of general officers to take cognisance of the case; and before these gentlemen André made an explanation, similar in substance to that which his letter to Washington had contained, but much more copious in detail. His enemies heard with admiration a defence, which with a magnanimous indifference to life admitted the fact, but with a generous regard to reputation vindicated the motives. The American board, however, confining themselves to the literal and simple fact of his being in disguise within the American lines, instead of taking into consideration all the concomitant circumstances, doomed the gallant André to suffer death as a spy. The only evidence of the fact was André's own admission: not only humanity, but justice required, that his own evidence, if allowed such weight against him, should also be allowed in his favour; and that his declaration of pure intentions ought to be considered, as well as his acknowledgment of an act contrary to the laws of war. At New York, all ranks, from a sentinel to the commander in chief, felt the most poignant concern at the situation of the unfortunate captive, whom they respected and admired as an officer, and loved and esteemed as a man. Sir Henry Clinton employed every effort to save so valuable a life: he opened a correspondence with Washington by means of a flag of truce, and urged every motive which justice, policy, and humanity could suggest, to induce a remission of the sentence. Finding his letters ineffectual, he sent out general Robertson with a flag, to confer upon the subject with any officers that should be appointed by general Washington. An interview took place between general Robertson and general Green, who had been president of the court martial; but all efforts to save the unfortunate An-

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dré were unavailing. André, finding his doom unavoidable, wrote a most pathetic letter, praying that he might not die the death of a common malefactor, but by a mode more befitting a soldier. Even this small boon was refused to a generous enemy, by the inexorable rigour of stern republicanism. On the 22d of October, the ill-fated hero met his death, with a composure, serenity, and fortitude, worthy of conscious innocence suffering unmerited punishment.

Thus fell the gallant André, losing his life for loyalty and patriotically endeavouring to serve his king and country. If criminality is to be estimated by intention, he was put to death without any proofs of guilty design, and with the strongest presumptions of innocence. Such relentless inhuman rigour could answer no purpose of policy, as it certainly neither enhanced the character, nor promoted the interest, of the Americans; it was evidently the effect of revenge, and of revenge foiled in its principal object. André suffered for the defection of Arnold. Had that general been caught, and undergone the punishment due to treachery, the impartial reader would not perhaps have blamed the sentence, and might have considered that as justice to a traitorous friend, which he must reprobate as cruelty to a fair and generous foe.¹

The death of André, which Washington could have easily prevented, will certainly in future ages be regarded as a dark spot in the bright character of the American general. Arnold published a declaration of his motives for leaving the service of America, consisting chiefly of invectives against his late associates, which, whether true or false, had, coming from him, the less weight, that the character of the Americans, now the object of his reprobation, was identically the same as before when the object of his panegyric. Winter now approaching, and the count de Guichen not having arrived from the West Indies, both parties, after concluding an agreement for the exchange of prisoners, retired into quarters. For the prevention of Guichen's arrival in North America, we are to find the causes in the transactions of the West Indies.

¹ Stedman, vol ii. p. 252.

SIR GEORGE RODNEY having, as we have seen, left Gibraltar in February, and sailed for the West Indies, had arrived at St. Lucie, and taken the command of the fleet upon the leeward island station by the latter end of March. Just previous to his arrival, M. de Guichen, with twenty-five ships of the line, and eight frigates, all full of troops, had paraded for several days before that island, with a view either of surprising or of overwhelming the British force by their great superiority. The good disposition of the troops made by general Vaughan, and of the ships by rear-admiral Parker, however, frustrated their design. Sir George Rodney, with twenty ships of the line, and the Centurion of fifty guns, followed the French fleet into Martinique, and offered them battle; but the enemy, notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers, would not venture to engage. To entice the enemy to leave the harbour, the British admiral retired to Gross Islet Bay in St. Lucie, leaving swift sailing frigates to watch their motions, and convey to him intelligence. On the 16th of April, Guichen sailed with his fleet; the following day Rodney came in sight of the enemy late in the evening, and found them disposed to avoid an engagement. He watched them with such vigilance as to prevent their escape. The next morning, the French admiral made very masterly dispositions for avoiding an engagement: this the British commander counteracted with equal nautical skill and professional ability, which at last rendered a battle unavoidable.

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West Indies.
Arrival of
Rodney.

His skill
draws the
enemy to
battle.

In forming the line of battle, the long established mode was, when fleets were nearly equal in number, to oppose ship to ship, by which means superior force and seamanship prevailed, without any extraordinary efforts of naval ability or conduct. Rodney possessed not only that professional experience, guided by which brave men fight in the way in which brave men have fought before, but a comprehensive genius, which could adopt measures to existing cases, and leave precedent when novelty tended more effectually to secure the object. The enemy being considerably superior in number, he proposed not to attack the whole at once, but with all his force to bear down on a part of theirs, so that by mastering one division, he

Established mode
of forming
the naval
line.

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Rodney
adopts a
new plan
of attack,
by break-
ing the
enemy's
line.

Some cap-
tains mis-
conceiving
his inten-
tion, dis-
concert the
execution.

The event
is there-
fore unde-
cisive.

Partial
conflicts.

might easily overpower the rest.^m For that purpose he directed his van to attack the hindmost ships of the enemy's centre, and the remainder of his fleet the rear. He also made a general signal to his ships to lie close to the enemy, and take example by the admiral. His fleet being in the proper position for engaging the enemy, according to the plan which he had arranged, he made the signal for every ship to attack her opposite, in the enemy's line. The commander of his van-most ship, a gentleman thoroughly experienced in the precededent mode of tactics, misconceived the admiral's meaning, and supposed his orders to be to steer towards the van-most ship of the enemy. This misapprehension communicating itself to the succeeding ships, tended to disconcert the masterly design of the admiral. His orders were not fully regarded in another particular: he had given, and had been obliged to repeat his signal, for lying close to the enemy. Several ships of his fleet kept at so great a distance, as not to second and support the admiral. The admiral's own ship, however, and some others, did very great execution; but the deviation from his orders, both as to plan and nearness, prevented a decisive issue to an engagement, for, and in which the commander had used every effort of design and execution which could lead to victory.

THE French fleet was beaten from the scene of action: Rodney pursued them, as soon as the crippled state of the ships that had engaged according to his orders, and the arrival of others in their proper position, permitted. Such despatch was used to repair the damaged ships, that on the 20th they again descried the enemy, but not in sufficient time to prevent them from taking refuge under Guadaloupe. In the beginning of May, the French fleet again sailed; and on the 10th, it was seen by the British a few leagues to windward. The enemy having

^m The examiner of the naval tactics which Rodney introduced, and which he himself in the last war, and others in the present, have practised with such terrible effect and glorious success, will see that it proceeded on the same principle that regulated the military tactics formed and exercised by the illustrious Frederic; and which produced the systems and movements of the Macedonian Philip, and his preceptor Epaminondas. The battle of Leuctra was gained by the masterly skill of the Theban hero directing his whole force on a part of the enemy's, with such disposition and compactness as to break their line. See description of the battle of Leuctra, Gillies's History of Greece, vol. iii. p. 368.

the advantage of the wind, were able either to hazard or to avoid an engagement at pleasure, but chose the latter alternative. Rodney endeavoured to gain the lee gage, but was not able to succeed. By feigning flight, on the 15th, he had almost drawn the enemy to battle; but after a partial cannonade between the extreme ships of the respective fleets, the enemy retired without a general battle. On the 19th, admiral Rodney endeavoured to turn the fleet of the enemy; and from his movements both parties became so entangled as to render a conflict unavoidable between the British van and the enemy's rear. The enemy having suffered considerable loss, bore away to Martinique. Rodney repaired to Carlisle Bay in Barbadoes, to refit his shattered ships. In these conflicts the French evinced themselves considerably improved in naval warfare, and our ships were much damaged in the repeated encounters; but the very object of their improved attack manifested conscious inferiority. Their chief purpose was to aim at our rigging, and thereby avoid CLOSE FIGHT, WHICH UNIFORM EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT EVERY OPPONENT OF THE ENGLISH NAVY TO SHUN, IF THEY WOULD AVOID DESTRUCTION. Spain sent a considerable naval force to join her ally in the West Indies; and thus recruited, the Bourbon fleet amounted to thirty-six ships of the line, a force that apparently must be able to overwhelm the British West Indies; but this ostensible accession of strength proved eventual weakness: the Spanish troops were too much crowded on board their transports; that circumstance, cooperating with the length of the voyage, the change of climate and diet, and above all, their peculiar laziness and want of cleanliness, the whole of those combined causes generated a mortal and contagious distemper, which first infecting their own seamen, at length spread, though not entirely with so fatal an effect, through the French fleet and land forces. The pestilential disease still continuing, prevented the French from profiting by their fleet. The Spanish admiral proceeded to the westward, and, having parted with the French at St. Domingo, went on to the Havannah. Besides the infectious disorder, there appeared to be a want of concert between the armaments of the two allies, which very greatly obstructed

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The enemy much superior in number, will not venture a close fight.

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The enemy disappointed in the chief objects of the campaign.

their schemes for annoying Britain. Part of the French plan of operations had been, after the expected reduction of the British power in the West Indies by the combined forces, that their fleet should proceed to New York; and in conjunction with the Americans and the French ships and army who were there before, should capture New-York, and drive the British from America. But after the first of these vast projects had failed, Guichen considering his former disappointments, the present state of his army, of his ships and men, found the expedition utterly impracticable, and proceeded directly to Europe. Rodney, aware of the original design, and on the departure of Guichen conceiving that he was bound for New York, sailed himself for the same place, where he thought his assistance would be so much wanted; but finding his services not necessary in that quarter, he returned in the close of the year to St. Lucie. Besides the operations between the fleets of the belligerent powers during this campaign, various conflicts took place among single ships, both in Europe and the West Indies, which did signal honour to the courage and skill of both parties, but in the result of every action manifested the superiority of Britain upon her own element.

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Proceedings against the rioters.—Lord Loughborough's charge to the grand jury—difference of opinion on the construction of Edward III.'s treason statute—legal authorities not altogether conformable to statutory definition—literal and free interpreters of statutes—lord Loughborough follows high authorities.—No grounds for the charge of rigorous severity against the rioters.—Political effects of the riots.—General election—contest for Westminster.—Mr. Fox is chosen on the 10th of October, which thenceforward is consecrated to anniversary celebration.—Continental affairs—the character of Joseph opens—he aspires at the possession of Bavaria—is supported by Frederic.—Hostilities between Prussia and Austria—are terminated by the peace of Teschen.—Continental powers are jealous of British commercial and naval greatness.—Conduct of Russia—armed neutrality—real objects of.—State and interest of Holland.—Holland favours the revolted colonies—remonstrances of Britain.—Discovery of a treaty between the Dutch and the Americans—rupture with Holland—the Dutch are the aggressors.—Meeting of Parliament—choice of a speaker—King's speech.—Mr. Fox's plan of attack against ministers—he begins with charges against lord Sandwich—his motion concerning the appointment of sir Hugh Palliser.—Mr. Burke resumes his plan of economical reform.—Beginnings of lord Chatham's second son, Mr. William Pitt.—The celebrated comic poet, Sheridan, turns his extraordinary talents to politics.—India affairs are extensively considered in parliament—two committees of inquiry are appointed—one has for its chairman Mr. Henry Dundas.—Questions for future deliberation respecting India, proposed by lord North.—Petitions from counties for redress of grievances.—Different opinions of Messrs. Fox and Burke on the marriage law.—Supplies.—Extravagant terms of the noted loan of

twelve millions.—Lord North, incorrupt himself, permits wasteful corruption in others—inefficacy, in arduous situations, of talents and benevolent dispositions, without firmness of resolution.—Session rises.

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1780.
Proceed-
ings against
the rioters.

TWO internal subjects principally attracted the public attention during the recess of 1780; the trial of the rioters and the general election. Persons accused of tumults committed within the county of Middlesex and the city of London, were arraigned at Hicks's hall; and bills being found for felony, either in robbery or arson, they were tried at the Old Bailey. The judge had not thought it necessary, in addressing the grand jury, to be peculiarly minute in explaining the law applicable to crimes which came so frequently under their consideration; and though well adapted to his view of the subject, the charge delivered no doctrines that particularly deserve historical record. Eighty-five persons being indicted, forty-three were acquitted, and forty-two capitally convicted; but of the condemned, twelve obtained mercyⁿ.

Lord
Lough-
borough's
charge to
the grand
jury.

For trying persons alleged to have committed outrages in the county of Surry, a special commission was appointed to sit at St. Margaret's hill in the borough; and the first nominee was Alexander Wedderburn, who was recently promoted to be lord chief justice of the common pleas, and called to the house of peers by the title of lord Loughborough. The persons here presented were accused of treason, and the judge delivered to the grand jury a charge, which the magnitude of the crime imputed, the doctrines promulgated, the high character of the speaker, and the splendid oratory of this exertion, combined in very strongly impressing on the public attention.

Difference
of opinion
on the con-
struction of
Edward
III.'s trea-
son statute.

THE learned reader must know that a very material difference subsists between the law of treason as it is expressed by the statute of Edward III. on the one hand, and on the other interpreted by lawyers and judges.^o The two chief species contained in the celebrated law of Edward are, to compass or intend the king's death, or to

ⁿ See Annual Register, 1780; Appendix to Chronicle, p. 271---277.

^o See Blackstone, vol. iv. p. 72---93.

levy war against his person and government. But lawyers, partly desirous of paying court to the sovereign, and partly convinced that such narrow limitations of legal definition may often screen enormous guilt, had introduced a greater latitude. They observed, that if a man should enter into a conspiracy for rebellion, fix a correspondence with foreign powers for that purpose, or even plot the overthrow of the existing constitution, if he was detected, and no rebellion or insurrection ensued, by the letter of this statute, he could not be convicted of treason. To prevent this inconvenience they had commonly laid their indictment for intending the death of the king, and had produced the intention of rebellion as a proof of the other intention, and thus confounded the two species of treason, which the statute had accurately distinguished;^p whereas the law had made only one kind of *intentional treason*, a purpose to put the king to death; the lawyers had made two, a design to levy war or rebel. It was frequently alleged, that by such an interpretation, lawyers and judges assuming to themselves a legislative authority, which is not vested in them by the constitution of their country, exercised it in extending penal law, and rendering designs capital that were not legally criminal. The object of this constructive interpretation was no doubt so far laudable; in estimating criminality, they proposed to take into the account moral depravity and political mischief, and to provide against new devices of flagitious ingenuity: but, on the other hand, the admission of such constructions might be abused to the most oppressive and tyrannical purposes.^q There were always in Rome^r, and have been and are in England, two classes of interpreters of law, the literal and the free; or, in the language of professional men, the arguers from law and from equity.^s Persons early instruct-

Legal authorities not altogether conformable to statutory definition.

Literal and free interpreters of statutes.

^p Most of these observations are either extracted from, or suggested by, Hume's account of the trial of lord Russel.

^q The danger of departure from established law, to punish even the most atrocious culprits, is perhaps no where more ably exhibited, than in Cæsar's speech on the discovery of Cataline's conspiracy, as presented by Sallust.

^r See Gibbon's account of the Sabinians and Proculicians, in his view of the Justinian code. Vol. vi.

^s In the parting view of the illustrious Mansfield, I endeavour to state the separate and comparative advantages and disadvantages of these two modes of interpretation.

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Lord
Loughbo-
rough fol-
lows high
authorities.

ed in the civil law have more frequently belonged to the latter class than the former. This was the case with lord Loughborough, who has, on all great questions, shown himself a liberal rather than a literal interpreter. He in this charge proceeded according to the practice of lawyers, and opinions of judges; and on this sanction he supported the constructive doctrine, instead of the precise definition, of legislature. Arguing on the *authority* of Fortescue, sir Matthew Hale, and other luminaries of judicial history, he stated, that every insurrection which, in the judgment of the law, is intended against the person of the king, be it to dethrone^t or imprison him, or to oblige him to alter his measures of government, or to remove evil counsellors from about him, amounts to levying war within the statute, whether attended with the pomp and circumstances of open war or not; and every conspiracy to levy war for these purposes, though not treason within the clause of levying war, is yet an overt act within the other clause of compassing the king's death. Some lawyers contended, that it was not consistent with legal propriety, to rest opinions on the authority of the judges, when they contravened an express statute; and that the substitution of a judge's opinion for the enactment of a legislative assembly, was changing judges into lawgivers.

THE judge did not escape without censure for the doctrines which his address contained; and persons who hastily examined his conduct, deemed him severe and sanguinary; but for that blame just grounds are not to be found either in his charge or proceedings. Whether it be constitutionally right that treason is to be ascertained by judicial interpretation, it is historically true that such has been the mode usually adopted by the most reputed judges on criminal trials: lord Loughborough therefore merely applied the rules and followed the example of his eminent predecessors. As the insurrection had been very atrocious, severe punishment was a requisite sacrifice to justice, order, and tranquillity; but so far was the judge from the superfluous rigour which was imputed to him, that he recommended to mercy such of the guilty as had extenuating circumstances in their favour. It may be farther

No
grounds
for the
charge of
rigorous
severity
against the
rioters.^t See charge, Annual Register, 1780, p. 231.

observed, that whether the construction of the judge concerning the guilt of a conspiracy to levy war were or were not just, no one was condemned who had not been found guilty of actual insurrection and rebellion against the king and government. His constructive treason therefore produced no effects to the accused, which would not have arisen from the most rigid interpretation. Forty-three were tried, of whom twenty-six were found guilty and the rest acquitted.*

THE riots, which were thus effectually suppressed, really strengthened administration: the scenes of enormity which were exhibited in the metropolis struck men with horror, and by a natural, though an erroneous effect, inspired a general dread of popular meetings, however legal or peaceable. These dispositions reached to the country meetings, petitions, and associations, and consequently to all applications for redress of grievance, and schemes for a reform in parliament. Political effects of the riots.

THE capture of Charleston, of which the news arrived soon after the riots, tended to erase the memory of past disappointments in the war, and to revive the sanguine hopes of the speedy subjugation of the colonies. The victory of Rodney, which had opened the naval campaign, succeeded by the stationary inaction of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe, joined to the little achievements of their mighty force in the West Indies, gratified the national pride, and cherished the hopes that the house of Bourbon would severely pay for the temerity of the attempt to wrest from Britain the dominion of the sea. Many who formerly reprobated the war, and condemned the measures and principles in which it originated, forgot their disapprobation when they saw or thought that it was likely to have a prosperous issue; and the influence and authority of the crown were more spread, and better fixed than they had been for several years. In this state of things, and disposition of the people, ministers conceived the season peculiarly favourable to a new election. The parliament had already sitten six years, and if it continued to the seventh, at the expiration of that time circumstances might be by no means so auspicious. Having resolved

* See Annual Register, 1780, p. 285---287.

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General
election.

Contest for
Westmin-
ster.

Mr. Fox is
chosen on
the 10th of
October,
which
thencefor-
ward is
consecra-
ted to an-
niversary
celebra-
tion.

Continen-
tal affairs.

on the measure, they gave no intimation of their intention until they thought it ripe for execution: but their plan being matured, on the 1st of September a proclamation was issued for dissolving the parliament. Besides the prevalence of a spirit so favourable to the ministerial party, there was another circumstance which tended to promote their success in the new election: various members of opposition, tired with long disappointment, began to consider their efforts useless, and determined to decline being candidates for again sitting in the legislature. From these different causes, the election of 1780 afforded much fewer disputes than any which had taken place from the beginning of the reign. Among the most warmly contested was the city of Westminster, for which two candidates contended, lord Lincoln and Mr. Fox, and the great champion of opposition was elected by a numerous majority on the 10th of October, a day ever since deemed worthy of anniversary celebration by those politicians who identify the conduct of the orator with the principles of the British constitution, and consecrated to remembrance as an epoch in the history of modern whiggism triumphant. The new parliament was summoned to meet on the 31st of October; but before our narrative follows its deliberations, it must exhibit a short view of foreign interests and affairs, which relating to Britain, very early occupied its attention and deliberation.

THOUGH Britain, during the American war, had less connexion with continental powers than at any other period of this last century, yet her contest with her colonies was a subject of the most interesting concern to the neighbouring nations. During a great part of the war, tranquillity prevailing in the northern and eastern states of Europe allowed them an almost undivided attention to the contest between Britain and America. The only interruption of the peace of Germany and Russia arose from a dispute about the electorate of Bavaria. The king of Prussia had in a few years improved his share of the Polish spoils to the highest advantage, and greatly meliorated the condition of recent as well as hereditary subjects: indeed, though his warmest admirers must admit that his ambition often violated justice in acquiring

1780.

The character of Joseph opens; he aspires at the possession of Bavaria.

dominions, his severest enemies must allow that he rendered his acquisitions more beneficial, and their inhabitants happier, than he found them when they became subjects to his government. The emperor Joseph was equally ambitious, but much inferior in wisdom of plan, or in steadiness of execution. On the death of the elector of Bavaria, this prince attempted to revive obsolete claims to the reversion of his dominions; and in the beginning of 1778, actually marched troops towards Munich, and dispossessed the elector palatine, the real heir, of the whole of that territory. Frederic justly considered this step as a violation of the Germanic constitution, and determined without delay to resist such an encroachment. He knew, that notwithstanding his alliance with Austria, cemented by the recent affiance of the royal families, France would regard with jealousy such an accession to the emperor's power; but engaged in schemes of maritime aggrandisement, would not employ any effectual efforts. He himself therefore saw that the protection of Bavaria must rest chiefly on his policy and power; and before he would interrupt the improvement of his kingdom by drawing the sword, he tried negotiation, opened a correspondence with the emperor, and professed a disposition to listen to his claims, to learn their extent and validity, and to admit them if they should prove well founded. The Austrian pretensions were so very weak, that even the ability of Kaunitz could not render them plausible, or prevent easy refutation. The empress queen, evidently convinced that her son's demands were ill founded, and that assertion would be impolitic, was pacifically disposed, but her son was resolved to maintain them by force, and encouraged in his obstinacy by his ministers, who chose to worship the rising sun. Frederic engaged the empress Catharine to second his opposition to the aspiring views of Joseph, and convinced her that it was the interest of the Russians to hinder the emperor, who was only entitled to be the first prince in Germany, from governing that great empire with despotic authority. Finding that the Austrian prince had collected large bodies of troops from Italy, Flanders, and Hungary, into Bohemia, he drew a no less

Is opposed by Frederic.

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Hostilities
between
Prussia
and Aus-
tria,are termi-
nated by
the peace
of Tes-
chen.

formidable force to his own frontiers. Joseph, in a letter, endeavoured to justify his claims by arguments; but soon finding, in the answer of Frederic, that he had to contend with a logician very superior to himself, he was mortified, and sent an angry reply, expressing his disposition to take a lesson from Frederic in the art of war.^x To this effusion of galled pride, the hero sent a wise, temperate, and firm answer;^y and finding hostilities unavoidable, with his usual ability he formed a comprehensive scheme to annoy his antagonist in various quarters; with his usual rapidity he commenced his operations, and established a decisive superiority over the arms of Joseph. Catharine meanwhile, with a view to obtain influence in the empire by espousing its cause, sent a considerable body of troops to join Frederic. Maria Theresa strongly urged her son to peace; but having conceived the hopes of rekindling the war between Turkey and Russia, and thus having himself only to contend with Prussia, he would listen to no proposals. At last, however, in spring 1779, learning that Russia had entirely composed her differences with Turkey, and was preparing a great army to cooperate with Frederic, he became accessible to pacific propositions. A congress was held at Teschen: Frederic, equally triumphant in the cabinet as in the field, without ostentatiously dictating, actually framed the terms. Joseph acknowledged the right of the elector palatine as heir to the sovereignty of Bavaria, renounced his claims, and virtually confessed that he had been disturbing the peace of Germany without tenable grounds. Commercial advantages in the last century transcended not only the experience, but even the imagination of former times, and rendered the formation and extension of mercantile establishments, and a marine force, one of the primary objects of policy with European nations: a natural, though not a wise concomitant of the desire of such a source of benefit, is jealousy of a state that possesses it in a superior degree. Envy the preeminence of Britain, maritime potentates anxiously beheld the progress of a quarrel by which they conceived her naval superiority must be

^x Gillies's Frederic, p. 476.^y Frederic's manifesto, State Papers, July 7, 1778.

considerably impaired. The most powerful of these states formed the vain hope of dispossessing Britain of her supremacy, and with that view, by unprovoked aggression, involved us in war. The other naval states did not openly combine with the house of Bourbon, but secretly favoured both those nations, and the colonies revolted from Britain. Deeply indebted to this country for maritime support and accommodation during her war with Turkey, Russia had been among the first to act hostilely herself, and encourage others to enmity.

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Continental powers are jealous of British commercial and naval greatness. Conduct of Russia.

Armed neutrality.

By the received law of nations in modern Europe, when a war broke out between any of the powers, on the one hand neutral states were not to be interrupted in their general trade with the belligerent parties, but on the other hand were to convey to neither, naval or military stores. Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, entered into an association for promoting a scheme which altered the public law concerning the right of neutral states to convey warlike stores. This was the treaty concluded at Copenhagen on the 19th of July 1780, under the name of the ARMED NEUTRALITY.^z The professed object of this combination was to protect, by an armed force, every species of neutral trade. The treaty set out with declaring, that the contracting parties entertained the most cordial amity for the several belligerent powers, and professed the strictest impartiality. It declared, they would carry on no contraband trade; but narrowed this definition into literal interpretation, and designedly omitted the spirit and object. They founded the asserted privilege of carrying what commodities they chose to the warring powers, not upon the EXISTING LAW OF NATIONS, but upon *natural right*: neutral ships were not to be searched without a material and well grounded cause, of which the contracting parties were to be the sole judges. The associated powers engaged to protect neutral trade, and reciprocally, severally, and jointly, to maintain a force for that purpose. They declared, that an injury done to any one of them as a neutral trader, should be accounted an injury done to all; and that, both jointly and severally,

^z See State Papers, July 1780.

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unless it was redressed, they should issue orders for reprisals. The association was to continue during the war, and should notify to the belligerent powers the existence of the treaty, its objects, and their resolutions to employ force for its support. Every person acquainted with the maritime force and situation of the several nations, clearly perceived that this plan, ostensibly impartial, was really meant to injure Britain. As the principle articles of warlike, especially naval, stores, came from Norway and the Baltic, England, from her local situation, had the means of intercepting such commodities much more than her southern enemies; she had also a superior maritime force; a much greater proportion of naval stores could be carried into Britain in her ships, than to Spain, or even to France, in their ships: the conveyance of stores, therefore, in neutral bottoms, was a greater advantage to her enemies than to Britain; they would reap the beneficial fruits from the neutral association, while Britain would lose in the same proportion that her enemies gained. The contracting parties could not but see that this compact was injurious to Britain, therefore their intentions must have been inimical.

State and
interest of
Holland.

BRITAIN considered this convention as a proof of unfriendly dispositions and designs in all the parties; but a variety of other causes combined to aggravate her displeasure towards the United Provinces. That the reader may have a complete view of the dispute between Great Britain and Holland, it is necessary to consider, not only recent, but distant portions of history, as the proximate causes of quarrel originated in very remote circumstances. From the first establishment of the Dutch commonwealth, two parties existed, which alternately predominated. The one consisted of the adherents of the princes of Orange, the first champions and successful vindicators of their rights and liberties; the other, of those who either by birth inherited, or by fortune or merit acquired, rank and influence. Gratitude for recent delivery was about to confer on William I. prince of Orange, a limited hereditary sovereignty, when assassination prevented the design from being accomplished.^a Maurice, his son and suc-

^a See Watson's History of Philip II.

cessor in the stadtholdership, being then a boy, could not profit by the occasion while it lasted, and notwithstanding the splendour of his subsequent exploits, the services which he performed, and the prosperity and glory to which he raised the republic, was never able to recover the opportunity. He and his successors naturally looked back with regret to that sovereignty which they had almost obtained, and endeavoured to enlarge to the utmost extent their official powers as stadtholders. The principal citizens, on the other hand, who had grown up along with the fortune of the state, not only opposed their designs, but endeavoured to limit their power, which they considered as becoming dangerous to public liberty, and inimical to the principles of the constitution. The bitterness of such a contest soon effaced from the minds of the nobles all the signal benefits which had been conferred on the state by the successive heroes of the Orange family. Great generals seemed no longer necessary in a season of peace and prosperity; nor did it follow, because it had hitherto so proved, that every prince of Orange was to be an illustrious captain; therefore the aristocratic party proposed the total abolition of the office of stadtholder, and the distribution of its various powers among their own leaders. Such was the origin and foundation of that republican faction which is distinguished in the history of Holland, and which, under various denominations, subsisted from the days of prince Maurice and Barneveldt to modern times. It was the constant and obvious policy of France, to maintain her influence in the councils of Holland, and, at the same time, to restrain and weaken, as much as possible, the power and political activity of the republic. The princes of the house of Orange were generally inimical to the views of France, and linked by blood and alliance with Britain. This state of affairs occasioned a permanent enmity between France and the house of Orange, and naturally produced an intimate connexion between that monarch and the aristocratic party. France diligently cultivated her influence with the anti-stadtholderian faction of Holland. William III. succeeded to the stadtholderate when he was only a child; and during his minority, the nobles, under the name of

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the Louvestein party, became extremely powerful, and being headed by the celebrated de Wit, were able totally to abolish the office: the violent irruption of Lewis XIV. into Holland, however, prompted the states to raise to power the party and individual most inimical to France, and most able to repress the unjustifiable ambition of that aspiring neighbour. The delivery of his country by William III.; the very high character and great influence of that prince, which was increased by his power from the time he became king of England; the resentment of the Dutch against the French, and their alarm from the ambitious politics of Lewis; repressed the party which derived its chief support from Gallic policy. On the death of William III. the stadtholderate became extinct, the states not choosing to renew it in favour of that part of his family which had succeeded to the title of Orange as well as to the principal part of his inheritance. Union, however, of views and interests with England, in repelling the ambition of the French, and opposing the succession of a Bourbon prince to the throne of Spain, rendered the states general no less inimical to Lewis, and friendly to England and the emperor, than they had been when William governed both countries: and the ability and address of Marlborough procured such personal influence with the states general, that the French party was not able to defeat the measures of the grand alliance. Towards the end of queen Anne's reign, the Dutch were closely connected with the antigallican party in England; but during the peace, which lasted for so many years after the treaty of Utrecht, the French party in Holland appears to have gained ground. The cooperation of the Dutch with Britain and the house of Austria in the war which commenced in 1740, was very inefficient; and to the influence of the partisans of France may, in a great degree, be ascribed that failure of Dutch exertion, which prevented the extraordinary efforts of the British troops from being victorious at Fontenoy. The same want of cordiality in the cause was obvious in other actions, particularly in the battle of Laffelt. In consequence of their victories, the French penetrated into Dutch Flanders, and prepared to descend on the island of Zealand. Perceiving the

danger which impended from the progress of the French, the Dutch determined to have recourse to a measure that had formerly saved them from ruin, and to declare the prince of Orange stadtholder. In the year 1748, the office was renewed in full plenitude of power in favour of the late prince of Orange, with the additional security of being rendered hereditary not only in the male, but the female lines of his family. This settlement appeared to cut off entirely the views of the adverse faction; but though depressed, or at least withheld from any means of political exertion, they were still potent and numerous, and only waited for a favourable opportunity which should operate as a signal for union and exertion. The prince of Orange dying in 1751, and leaving his son, the present prince, a child of three years old, the long minority much weakened the influence of the stadtholderian party, and the Gallican faction became powerful. At the commencement of the seven years' war, Britain claimed six thousand men, who had been promised as auxiliaries by a defensive treaty; but the Dutch refused to comply, and became the carriers of contraband goods with impunity, until Mr. Pitt was raised to the head of affairs. They even privately cooperated with our French enemies, while a French party openly avowed its enmity to this country. The French interest having rapidly advanced during the nonage, continued to be very powerful even during the administration, of the present prince, and used every artifice to inflame the jealousy of the Dutch against the great naval power, and particularly the increase of commerce, which Britain had attained.

SUCH was the state of parties and sentiments in Holland, when war broke out between this country and her colonies. From the beginning of the contest the Dutch had secretly favoured America, but became more open in assistance as the fortune of England began to decline, and as her enemies multiplied. Holland protected American ships when laden with plunder taken from British merchants, and even suffered a provincial pirate to take refuge in the Texel; in the East and West Indies she assisted our enemies, and in America our revolted subjects. In Europe, contrary both to the general law of

Holland
favours
the revolt-
ed colo-
nies.

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Remon-
strances of
Britain.Discovery
of a treaty
between
the Dutch
and Ame-
ricans.

nations and to specific treaties, she conveyed warlike stores to our enemies. Holland had sent an armed force to prevent our ships from acting, according to the law of nations, and the spirit and letter of particular treaties, in searching ships which should be suspected of carrying warlike stores. Her admiral, count Byland, fired upon British ships that were sent to examine her vessels in the manner prescribed by the treaty of 1674; and various amicable representations and remonstrances were made by Great Britain^b to the states general, but without effect. Great Britain, when pressed by so many enemies, demanded the succours which were stipulated by different treaties, and especially that of 1716,^c but obtained no satisfactory answer. All these circumstances, combined with her accession to the armed neutrality, not only indicated, but manifested, in the republic, a disposition hostile to her natural ally and most liberal benefactor.

AN incident now happened, which discovered to what extent the enmity of this pretended friend was carried: Mr. Henry Laurens, late president of the American congress, had been appointed ambassador to Holland, and was captured in a Philadelphia ship in the beginning of September on the banks of Newfoundland by a British frigate. The package which contained his papers had been thrown overboard, but its bulk preventing it from suddenly sinking, it was saved by the boldness and dexterity of a British seaman, and most of the papers recovered from the effects of the water. Mr. Laurens being brought to England, was committed on a charge of high treason. When interrogated, he made no answer to any question of importance, but his papers were sufficiently explicit. A treaty of amity and commerce between America and Holland appeared to have been in agitation for more than two years, and Mr. Laurens was to bring the same to a conclusion. The negotiators on the side of Holland, were M. Van Burkel, pensionary and counselor to the city of Amsterdam (an officer of great weight and power), with other members of the registry, assisted

^b See the correspondence between British ministers, the ambassador sir Joseph Yorke, and the Dutch; State Papers, 1780.

^c See Chalmers's Collection of Treaties.

by some great commercial houses of that city. Sir Joseph Yorke, the British ambassador at the Hague, was immediately instructed how to proceed: he accordingly expostulated in strong memorials to the states general, and represented to them the clandestine correspondence which Amsterdam had long been carrying on with rebels against a sovereign to whom the republic was joined in the strictest ties of friendship. He therefore demanded, in the name of the king his master, not only a formal disavowal of so irregular a conduct, but insisted on speedy satisfaction adequate to the offence, and the punishment of the pensionary Van Burkel and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public, and violators of the rights of nations. To this remonstrance an immediate answer not having been given, its substance was repeated in still stronger terms, accompanied by the following intimation: "His majesty, by the complaints made through his ambassador, has placed the punishment and the reparation in the hands of your high mightinesses; and it will not be until the last extremity, that is to say, in case of a denial of justice, or of silence, which must be interpreted as a refusal, that the king will take them upon himself."^d Here one nation complained to another of an injury received from subjects of that other, and demanded public disavowal and punishment of the aggressors. It rested with the other nation, either to disavow the act and punish the actors, or by refusing satisfaction justify what had been done. The latter alternative the states general chose; they did not answer the memorial, and thus compelled the British sovereign to seek by force that redress which peaceable application could not obtain. Sir Joseph Yorke received orders to withdraw from the Hague; and that step was followed, before the close of the year, by a declaration of hostilities against Holland. Manifestoes followed from both parties; but, on considering the whole circumstances of the case, an impartial reader can entertain no doubt that the Dutch were the aggressors.

Rupture
with Hol-
land.

Dutch are
the aggres-
sors.

^d See State Papers from Nov. 18, to Dec. 29, 1780, relative to a rupture with Holland.

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Meeting
of parlia-
ment.

ON the 31st of October parliament met, and, before they proceeded to business, ministers proposed a new speaker. Sir Fletcher Norton had frequently thwarted and censured administration, and given umbrage to the court party; but he excited the greatest displeasure in 1777, when, on presenting bills for paying the civil list debts, he made a speech enlarging on the magnificence of the commons, and recommending economy in the management of their gift. Ministers considering such an adviser as by no means proper for being speaker of the house, embraced the earliest possible opportunity of dismissing him from that office. With this view they praised the firmness, prudence, and diligence, with which he had discharged his laborious duties, but lamented that his ardent zeal and indefatigable efforts had very much impaired his constitution: actuated by a grateful regard to the ease and health of so valuable a member, the house, according to ministers, ought to relieve him from so troublesome an employment, and substitute a more able-bodied man to preside over the commons. They therefore recommended Mr. Cornwall, as a gentleman in every other respect qualified for the speaker's chair, and also possessing sufficient corporal vigour. Opposition expressed the greatest contempt for the ridiculous farce that ministers were acting, and imputed the proposed dismissal to ministerial resentment on account of sir Fletcher's upright conduct. On a division, the nomination of Mr. Cornwall was carried by a majority of 203 to 134.

Choice of
a new
speaker.The king's
speech.

HIS majesty's speech, after expressing confidence in the loyal and patriotic dispositions and wishes of his people, described the mighty efforts of France and Spain to support the American rebellion, and destroy the commerce and reduce the power of Britain; the glorious efforts and brilliant successes of the British arms by sea and land, which had frustrated the designs, and disappointed the expectations of our enemies; and his confidence, that continuance in these exertions would bring the war to a happy conclusion. After the repetition of reiterated arguments against the origin and conduct of the American war, opposition descended to the events of the last campaign, and insisted that, though the victories

were most splendidly honourable to the British forces, they did not, in the result, advance the ministerial object of conquering America. They had often predicted, that certain successful operations would terminate the war; but as often as the predictions were made, they were falsified. British soldiers and sailors fought valiantly in the year 1780, as they had always fought; they had gained battles and taken towns, but to what purpose? Could any man say, that the conquest of America was less distant, than when we had driven our colonies to revolt?

MR. FOX, resuming his usual function of accusing ministers, gave notice that he should after the holidays move, first, for the dismissal of the earl of Sandwich; and then for bringing him to condign punishment: that he should found the motions on two different causes; for advising his majesty to promote sir Hugh Palliser to the government of Greenwich hospital; and for the shameful neglect of the navy. Sir Hugh Palliser had not taken his seat as member for Huntingdon, when Mr. Fox intimated his intention of censuring his recent appointment; but being informed of this intimation, he speedily repaired to the house, in order personally to support his own cause. The 4th of December being the day appointed to take the navy estimates into consideration, it was presumed that Mr. Fox would embrace the opportunity of attacking the conduct and late appointment of Palliser; that gentleman therefore resolved to appear in vindication of his character. Mr. Fox commenced his attack: sir Hugh Palliser (he said) had been convicted of a false and malicious accusation against his superior officer, and, on charges exhibited against himself, barely acquitted by a court martial; nevertheless, he was promoted to a post of distinction and profit, which had heretofore been held by men of the first naval merit, and was intended as a retreat and reward to those who had essentially served their country. This appointment, he considered, as the highest insult that could be offered to the navy, and the greatest stigma that could be affixed to the service. He did not blame the person who accepted that place, but the first lord of the admiralty, whose con-

Mr. Fox's plan of attack against ministers. He begins with charges against lord Sandwich.

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duct in it ought to be the subject of their inquiry. Lord North answered Mr. Fox, and displayed one of his chief parliamentary excellences, ability and readiness of reply. The appointment of sir Hugh Palliser (he said) was not the act of the first lord of the admiralty alone, but of the other ministers also. Mr. Fox's principal objection to the nomination was, that the court martial upon admiral Keppel had imputed unworthy motives to his accuser. Therein that tribunal had exceeded its jurisdiction; the court did not sit on admiral Palliser, but on admiral Keppel. They had not heard Palliser in his own defence, but pronounced an injurious opinion, without establishing its grounds. The second objection of Mr. Fox was, that sir Hugh Palliser had been barely acquitted; but his interpretation was confuted by the sentence itself, and especially the following words: "The court having taken
 " the whole of the evidence into consideration, both on
 " the part of the prosecution as well as in favour of the
 " prisoner, were of opinion, that the conduct of sir Hugh
 " Palliser, was so far from being reprehensible on the 27th
 " and 28th of July, that in many parts it appeared exem-
 " plary and highly meritorious." Exemplary conduct meant such as was a proper example for other officers to follow, and a fit object for imitation. According to this natural and true construction of the sentence, the minister contended that sir Hugh Palliser was undoubtedly an object of requital; and after his conduct had been declared highly meritorious and exemplary, administration would have been criminally culpable if they had neglected to give a suitable reward. On the 6th of December the recess took place, and parliament did not again meet until

1781.

the 25th of January. Papers respecting the rupture with Holland were laid before the houses. Ministers entered into a detailed vindication of their proceedings, to prove that the Dutch had violated both general neutrality and particular treaties; they contended, that as we had applied in vain for redress, hostilities were therefore unavoidable. Opposition members, with their usual ingenuity, endeavoured to demonstrate our enemy to be in the right, and the British government to be in the wrong; and for that purpose they contrasted the present system respecting conti-

mental connexions, with the policy of former periods since the revolution. Ministers replied, that their object was the same as the purposes of William and Anne, to humble the house of Bourbon; but that the Dutch had, contrary to wisdom and their own interest, changed their measures, and, misled by a factious party, assisted their natural enemies against their natural friends. In answer to fanciful analogies, taken from remote and dissimilar periods of history, and theories built upon these, they referred to the existing case, as proved by authentic documents, to evince that Holland was the aggressor, and by refusing satisfaction had forced Britain to go to war.

On the 1st of February, Mr. Fox, in pursuance of his notice, moved, that the appointment of sir Hugh Palliser to be governor of Greenwich hospital, after he had been declared by a court martial guilty of having preferred a malicious and ill-founded accusation against his commanding officer, was a measure totally subversive of the discipline, and derogatory to the honour of the navy. He exhibited the whole detail of the proceedings by or concerning admirals Keppel and Palliser, with all their consequences, real and supposed, in one view, in order to support by his former arguments the present motion. Ministers having replied by repeating their former reasonings, offered an amendment destructive of the original proposition, and carried it in the affirmative by a majority of two hundred and fourteen to one hundred and forty-nine.

His motion concerning the appointment of sir Hugh Palliser.

WHILE Mr. Fox was thus eagerly employed in attacking ministry, Mr. Burke again attempted to introduce his plan for financial reform; and from the new parliament professed to expect a support which he had not experienced from the former. The bill itself not being changed since the former year, and the genius of Mr. Burke having then brought forward every important argument that could be adduced, the substance of his reasoning on the present occasion was necessarily similar to his arguments in the preceding session: the bill was thrown out at the second reading, by a majority much smaller than for a long time had usually voted in favour of ministry.

Mr. Burke resumes his plan of economical reform.

THE debate previous to this division is remarkable for a circumstance distinct from the intrinsic merits of the

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Beginning
of lord
Chatham's
second
son, Mr.
William
Pitt.

question ; it called forward, for the first time in parliament, the genius of Mr. William Pitt, second son of the illustrious earl of Chatham. At the general election, this youth, in the twenty-second year of his age, entered parliament, while the expectations of all ranks and parties were aroused in his favour. It was publicly known that his illustrious father had conceived the highest opinion of his talents and acquirements. Lord Chatham had himself inspected the education of his children ; and though immersed in public business, under the pressure of age and bodily infirmity, with anxious delight had tutored, formed, and directed the opening understanding of such a promising son. In every stage of his education, young Pitt impressed all those who knew him with admiration of his talents and acquirements. As he advanced in years, he had progressively risen in estimation, and was chiefly eminent for masculine strength and compass of intellectual powers, rapidly mastering the various departments of knowledge and science, studying as a scholar, comprehending and generalising, as a philosopher ; bold and original in conception, profound in research, indefatigable in application, he had a firmness of temper, which steadily pursued what he perceived to be right, and adhered to his own plans of conduct, undisturbed by the ridicule of frivolity, and unseduced by the allurements of vice. At the university, he was deemed far superior to ordinary men, and as one destined to transcend his contemporaries as much in the highest deliberative and executive departments of public life, as he then surpassed them in the erudition and science of academic retirement. Some of his friends at Cambridge proposed that he should stand candidate for representing the university in parliament, but declining this honour unless unanimously offered, he was returned for Poole. In the speech which he now delivered, Mr. Pitt fully justified the anticipations of the public, and was considered from that time as an important accession to parliamentary ability. Although the young orator voted and spoke on the side of opposition, he did not connect himself with any of its members as a party, but, like his renowned father, he trusted entirely to himself, without seeking eminence through the collective influence of a com-

1781.

The celebrated comic poet, Sheridan, turns his extraordinary talents to politics.

bination. The same session brought another splendid addition to parliamentary genius : Mr. Sheridan, after far surpassing all contemporary writers, and indeed all of the eighteenth century, in comic poetry, first exhibited in the senate that strong, brilliant, and versatile genius, which had acquired the dramatic palm merely because its possessor had chosen that species of intellectual exercise.

SIR PHILIP JENNINGS CLARKE, notwithstanding his repeated defeats, resumed his design of excluding contractors from a seat in the house. A bill which he brought in for that purpose, was thrown out by a majority of one hundred and twenty to one hundred ; and a bill proposed by Mr. Crewe, to restrain revenue officers from voting at elections for members of parliament, met with a similar fate.

INDIA affairs now came before the house : petitions were presented from the natives of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, complaining that the supreme court of judicature established by the act of 1773, had greatly exceeded its powers ; that it extended its jurisdiction to persons whom it was not the intention of the king and parliament to subject to its decrees ; that it had taken cognisance of matters both originally and pending the suit, the exclusive determination of which the petitioners humbly conceived it to have been the intention of the king and parliament to leave to other courts ; that the judges considered the criminal law of England as in force and binding upon the natives of Bengal, though utterly repugnant to the laws and customs by which they had formerly been governed. Petitions were presented to parliament by three classes, who were affected by what they conceived to be an unwarranted assumption of jurisdiction ; first, by the governor general and council ; secondly, by the agents of the British subjects ; and thirdly, by the East India company. A select committee was, at the instance of general Smith, appointed to consider India affairs, and the proposer was nominated chairman. To this committee the petitions were referred : the investigation of their grounds produced a variety of information, which afterwards extended the objects of the inquiry to deliberative and executive acts, as well as judicative, and eventually laid the foundation of a very celebrated prosecution. All parties appeared to

India affairs are extensively considered in parliament.

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Two committees of inquiry are appointed;

one has for its chairman Mr. Henry Dundas.

Questions for future deliberation respecting India, proposed by lord North.

agree, that in the imperfect state of their knowledge of facts it was proper to proceed with great caution and delicacy, yet on a summary review, the chief members of both sides appeared to think, that there were among the company's servants counteracting interests that very materially injured the value of India possessions. The select committee having been appointed in February, had already presented a long report, when intelligence arrived of such a state of affairs in the Carnatic, as induced the minister to propose a secret committee, for the purpose of inquiring into the general management of the state of affairs in India, including the farther investigation of the subjects suggested by the petitions. After some objections from opposition to the secrecy, the motion was carried, a committee was chosen from both sides of the house, and Mr. Henry Dundas appointed chairman. In consequence of the report of the secret committee, a bill was proposed by general Smith, for a new regulation of the supreme judicature in India, which, after some partial changes was passed into a law.

THE minister submitted various propositions to the house respecting Indian affairs, but rather as subjects of discussion than as measures for adoption. Of these the most important were, Whether it would be proper to throw the trade to India open ; to grant a monopoly to another company ; or to bestow a new charter on the present company, and reserve to the public a great share of their profits ? Whether it would be proper for the crown to take the territorial possessions and revenues entirely into its own hands, or to leave them to the management of a mercantile company ? These topics underwent a variety of discussion, but without producing any efficient resolution during the present session. As themes, however, of reflection and argument, they turned the attention of members to the contemplation of Indian affairs, and prepared them for understanding the nature and tendency of such plans as should be afterwards proposed. Lord North introduced a temporary and short bill, continuing the company's monopoly for a limited time, until a more permanent and comprehensive plan should be formed. By this bill the company was to pay four hundred and two

thousand pounds to government, as a share of its past profits, and also an annual sum in future.

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In the house of lords the duke of Bolton proposed an inquiry relative to the capture of the East and West India convoy, in the course of which much censure was passed on the general conduct of the navy ; but his grace at length withdrew his motion. Although the riots had damped the spirit of association, yet some of the counties continued to associate for the purpose of procuring a redress of grievances, and appointed delegates to give support and efficacy to their acts. These, as acting for their constituents, having assembled, prepared a petition to the house of commons, stating the alleged grievances, and the desired redress. There were many who, admitting the existence of them, and the necessity of a remedy, yet totally disapproved of such a convention. The petition was therefore subscribed by three several delegates, in their individual and not their collective capacities. When presented however to parliament, the powers that had been assumed by delegates were the chief subjects of animadversion by the opposers of the petition, which was rejected by a majority of two hundred and twelve, to one hundred and thirty-five. The house of commons on this occasion shewed a jealous vigilance of an encroachment on the established constitution, by discountenancing a representative system which was formed by detached individuals, and unknown to the laws of the land.

Petitions
from counties
for the
redress of
grievances.

NEAR the close of the session an inconvenience that had arisen from the marriage act 1751, produced the correction of a clause in that law. It had been enacted, that no marriage could be valid unless it was solemnized in a church or other place wherein the celebration of nuptials was lawful before the act. A pauper who had been married in a chapel erected after that period, being sent with a large family to the parish wherein he conceived himself entitled to a settlement as a married man, was refused, on the ground that, not having complied with the terms of the statute, he was not a married man. An application was made to the court of king's bench ; and the judges though they lamented the hardness of the case, yet, in conformity to the statute, were under the necessity of jus-

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Different
opinions of
Messrs.
Fox and
Burke on
the mar-
riage law.

tifying the recusants. Through the ignorance or inadvertency of the parties and the clergymen, many marriages were in the same predicament, and great numbers of innocent children, without any immoral conduct or intention on the part of their parents were bastardised. Lord Beaucamp proposed an act of retrospective operation, legalising such marriages, and legitimating their issue. So humane and equitable a bill was unanimously and speedily passed. The consideration of this particular clause led many to take a view of the marriage act in general ; and among others Mr. Charles Fox, who, employing the arguments that had been used in opposition to the bill in 1751, and especially with distinguished ability by his father, proposed a total repeal of the law, and brought in a bill for that purpose : but it was rejected without a division. Mr. Fox on the occasion viewed the subject in a light rather democratical, considering the inclination of the contracting parties as the *sole* criterion of proper marriages. His friend Mr. Burke expressed a different opinion, and contended, that during the nonage of parties, the sanction of parents or other nearest relations was requisite in that act, the most important of their lives, as well as in others of less comparative moment. The marriage act (he said) justly hit the medium between close and mischievous restraint, and the former laxity which had been the cause of such disorders, and so many just complaints. Concerning the control to which natural liberty should be subjected for the sake of general expediency, these two illustrious friends manifested on this incidental occasion, a diversity of opinion, which was not much regarded at the time, but from subsequent proceedings and events has been carefully noted by examiners of the series and system of their respective principles and conduct.

Supplies.

THE pecuniary transactions of this year were subjects of the severest animadversion. The supplies were granted without opposition, though not without reproach of ministers, for the uselessness, through their misconduct, of the most lavish grants. Ninety-one thousand seamen were voted, and, including foreign troops, about eighty thousand landmen. The whole amount required for the public service was 22,458,337l. To provide so large a

sum, besides the ordinary means, with the assistance of contributions from the bank and East India company, twelve millions were raised by a loan. The subscribers to this loan, for every hundred pounds contributed, obtained one hundred and fifty in annuities, after the rate of three per cent. per annum, and an additional twenty-five pounds in an annuity at four per cent. per annum; which rate of interest was to be continued until the annuity should be redeemed. 480,000l. were raised by a lottery, the tickets in which were distributed among the subscribers in the proportion of four tickets for every thousand pounds subscribed. By comparing the terms of this loan with the price of the several funds on which it was negotiated, it was immediately seen that subscribers had a gain of more than ten per cent. besides the current interest, and in fact the omnium bore an immediate premium of ten per cent. The bestowal of such very advantageous terms on the subscribers to the loan underwent a severe scrutiny. Mr. Fox inveighed against it, as, in the first place, a much less favourable bargain than might have been obtained. The minister had been offered money to the amount of thirty-eight millions, at five per cent. without any premium, and had chosen to borrow it at sixteen per cent. for the first year, making near six per cent. for ever^d, and imposing an unnecessary annuity on this country, of near one hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Fox contended, in very forcible reason-

d Average price of three per cents.	l.	s.	d.
was 58 1-2 therefore 150 was	87	15	0
Four per cents. at 72 1-2, 95 is	18	2	6
Lottery tickets at 12 l. 10s. four for 100l. is 50l., for 100	5	0	0
	110	17	6

The current interest was for each hundred pounds 4l. 10s. in the three per cents. 10l. in the four, and 15l. on the lottery tickets; so that the minister paid a premium of near eleven per cent. for borrowing at more than legal interest.

Interest of loan	5	5	0
Interest of premium	0	10	9
	5	15	9

15s. 9d. beyond legal interest on each 100l.

15l. 9d 12,000,000l. 94,500l.

Thus an annuity of 94,500l. is forever paid by this country more than was necessary for the same sum of money, if lord North had made the best terms he could for the good of his country.

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ing, that such was not the conduct of a competent and faithful steward ; that the minister must either have been grossly ignorant, criminally negligent, or willfully treacherous to his country. He could not be so ignorant as to suppose it was better to pay six per cent. than five ; neither could it be imputed to negligence, because the subscribers were the minister's own particular friends. His favourite contractor, Mr Atkinson, for one, had the disposal of three millions three hundred thousand, the immediate profit of which was three hundred and thirty thousand pounds. The other shares were also distributed among the minister's adherents. Mr. Fox proposed that the lists of both subscribers and proposers should be laid before the house. Lord North by no means consented to the application of this test ; cautiously avoiding a detailed answer to Mr. Fox, he in general declared that he had made the best bargain he could, but opposed all inquiry into its circumstances. Hurtful, Mr. Fox observed, as the financial waste was to the pecuniary interest of the country, it was still more injurious to political, by feeding corruption already so enormous. Mr. Fox so completely discussed this subject, that though afterwards frequently debated both by the commons and the peers, no new facts or arguments were adduced.

Lord North in-
corrupt
himself,
permits
wasteful
corruption
in others.

THE impartial historian cannot justify the public steward for so prodigal a waste of the public money ; but must exhibit the twelve millions loan of 1781 as very inconsistent with the character of an able and upright minister. On the other hand, however, he will not hastily impute such donatives to personal corruption. The individual integrity of lord North has never been impeached ; his bitterest political enemies never alleged that there was any defalcation of national treasure for his own use ;^e but what his own rectitude prevented in himself, his inattention suffered in others. With great talents, and manifold acquirements, of an acute understanding, and benevolent dispositions the minister possessed a constitutional indolence, which, when mingled with good nature, often allows to friends and connexions much more indulgence than the

^e Personal enmity, the amiable character of this minister, has, I believe, never provoked.

stern austerity of rigid morality would permit; and in gratifying the wishes, or promoting the interest of the objects of its attachment, frequently transcends the bounds of duty. From this source probably arose the largesses of a minister, than whom no one did more to serve his friends. At the same time, a considerable portion of his donatives must be imputed to political considerations, to the desire of extending his influence, and fortifying himself against the formidable host by which he was assailed.

On the 18th of July the session was closed with a speech from the throne, in which the king thanked his parliament for their exertions during so long and important a session. He expressed his satisfaction that, in the midst of the difficulties of so complicated and extensive a war, the ancient spirit of the British nation was not diminished. He approved highly of the consideration that had been bestowed on the affairs of India, and trusted the business would be resumed and completed at their next meeting. "Peace (he concluded) is the earnest wish of my heart, but I have too firm a reliance on the spirit and resources of the nation, and the powerful assistance of my parliament, and the protection of a just and all ruling Providence, to accept in any terms and conditions, than such as may consist with the honour and dignity of my crown, and the permanent interest and security of my people."

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Inefficiency of talents and benevolent dispositions, without firmness of resolution, in arduous situations: Session rises.

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East Indies—Hyder Ally invades the Carnatic—colonel Baillie defeats him, but is drawn into an ambuscade, overpowered by numbers, and destroyed.—Rapid progress of Hyder.—Consternation at Madras—alarm reaches Calcutta.—Sir Eyre Coote sent to command in the Carnatic—comparatively small army.—Plan of operations for 1781.—Successive victories over Hyder.—Coote restores the British affairs in the Carnatic.—Admiral Hughes destroys Hyder's shipping on the Malabar coast—reduces Dutch settlements.—Europe.—Plans of the house of Bourbon when reinforced by the Dutch.—French invade the island of Jersey—are at first successful, but finally repelled.—Blockade of Gibraltar—British fleet supplies the garrison with provisions—Spaniards resolve to attempt its reduction by storm—immense preparations for this purpose.—General Elliot.—Grand scheme for totally discomfiting the enemy—bold, masterly, and complete disposition—sally of November 27th—entirely destroys the enemy's preparations.—Darby endeavours to bring the enemy's fleet to battle, but in vain.—The combined fleet of forty-nine ships of the line sails to the channel—British fleet of thirty ships keeps the sea.—The hostile Armada, notwithstanding its superiority, will not venture an attack—retires to harbour.—British trade protected.—Admiral Kempenfeldt intercepts a French convoy.—War with Holland.—Action off the Dogger-bank.—Commodore Johnstone's expedition to the cape of Good Hope—though not entirely successful, captures several valuable prizes.—West Indies.—Tremendous hurricane in the Leeward Islands—in Jamaica—humane endeavours to alleviate the distresses.—Campaign opens.—Reduction of St. Eustatius.—Holland experiences the folly of going to war with Britain.—De Grasse arrives in the West Indies with a greater fleet than the British.—Admiral

Hood, detached by Rodney, offers battle to the French—they will not venture a close engagement, but keep a running fight.—A French armament invades Tobago—small garrison there—character and gallant defence of Governor Fergusson—his judicious and kind treatment of his negroes—their gratitude, fidelity, and valour—overpowered by numbers, yields by an honourable capitulation.—Rodney endeavours to meet de Grasse, who avoids an encounter.—Spaniards reduce West Florida.—Last efforts of Britain for the recovery of North America—general misinformation and false conclusions of ministers—magnify every transient success—sanguine hopes from the reduction of Carolina delusive.—Object and plan of the campaign 1781.—Lord Cornwallis begins his march.—Expedition of light troops—defeat of the enterprising and brave Tarleton—disadvantage to the British from this disaster.—Battle of Guilford—Cornwallis successful, but with considerable loss.—Operations of lord Rawdon in Carolina—enterprise, skill, and genius of that commander, but by great superiority of numbers is cut off from communication with Cornwallis—returns to Britain—is succeeded by colonel Stewart, who is obliged to act on the defensive.—Cornwallis enters Virginia—reaches Williamsburg—opposed by an American and French force—establishes himself at Gloucester, in expectation of cooperation from general Clinton.—French and American army near New York.—Washington projects to march against Cornwallis, without being followed by Clinton—dexterous stratagem by which he overreaches the British commander—with his army joins the forces in Virginia.—Cornwallis surrounded—expecting succours from Clinton resolves to defend himself to the last—skilful and gallant defence—a French fleet blocks up the river—our brave general still holds out—the garrison fast diminishes—a general assault prepared—finding himself totally unable to resist, lord Cornwallis at length surrenders.

WE left Hyder Ally preparing to enter the Carnatic: for this purpose he had collected a mighty army. The force on the Madras establishment amounted to about

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East
Indies.Hyder
Ally in-
vades the
Garnatic.Baillie de-
feats him
at Perim-
baucum ;

thirty thousand men, but was dispersed at great distances, either in quarters, garrison, or upon various detached services; part was employed in the Malabar coast, and a very valuable detachment was on the Guntoor circar, under the conduct of colonel Baillie. The presidency of Madras was not sufficiently impressed with a sense of the nature and extent of Hyder's designs, and by no means employed prudent precautions to secure passes, and fortify posts, to prevent his inroads. Hyder having made his way through the Ghauts, on the 22d of July 1780 advanced without opposition into the level country, with desolation and terror, while his son, Tippoo Saib, was sent to the northern circars. Hyder Ally besieged the city of Arcot, which its nabob defended in such a manner as to excite great suspicion of his fidelity. Tippoo Saib advanced with a great body of cavalry upon the northern circars, whilst at the opposite extremity different parties of the enemy were approaching to Madras and the borders of Tinivelly country. Sir Hector Munro, the British general, formed the design of compelling Hyder to raise the siege, and himself effecting a junction with Baillie's detachment, which was marching to the south. Hyder on the approach of Munro's army raised the siege, but occupied such a position as intercepted the communication between colonel Baillie and the main army. Baillie, meanwhile, with a force consisting of above two hundred Europeans and eighteen hundred Sepoys, encountered Tippoo Saib at the head of thirty thousand horse and eight thousand foot, at a place called Perimbaucum,^f where he made masterly dispositions to withstand the prodigious superiority of number. After a very severe action the British gained a complete victory, but for want of cavalry were unable to preserve their baggage. Baillie found that from the intervention of Hyder's army he could not make good a junction with general Munro, and at the same that it would be impossible long to retain his present post for want of provisions.

^f See Memoirs of the war in Asia, from 1780 to 1784, by Dr. William Thompson.*

* See Life of Dr. W. T. in Phillips's Public Characters for 1803.

He sent intelligence of his situation to sir Hector ; and colonel Fletcher was despatched to his assistance, who, after narrowly escaping being betrayed by his guides, effected a junction with Baillie. Their detachments now prepared to force their way to the British army. Hyder pretended a resolution not to oppose them, and to change his position, but really formed an ambuscade round the road by which they were to pass ; while a body of his cavalry, by various movements, diverted the attention of the English camp. On the 10th of September, Baillie's corps advanced into the toils, and were soon surrounded by forty thousand men, besides a corps of European artillery. Notwithstanding this surprise, the English leader made a masterly disposition and gallant resistance. The Mysore troops were giving way in the greatest consternation, and victory appeared to be in the hands of the British, when a fatal accident reversed the fortune of the day : the tumbrils which contained the ammunition suddenly blew up with two dreadful explosions in the centre of the British lines ; one whole face of their column was entirely laid open, and their artillery overturned and destroyed. The destruction of men was great, but the total loss of ammunition was still more dreadful to the survivors. Tippoo Saib instantly seized the moment of advantage, and attacked the broken column with his cavalry ; he was soon followed by the French corps, the first line of infantry, and entirely overpowered the Sepoys in the British service, who, after displaying the most intrepid valour, were cut to pieces. Baillie himself being dangerously wounded, rallied his handful of Britons, formed a square, and his soldiers, without ammunition, fighting with their bayonets, repulsed the Asiatic host, until exhausted rather than conquered they fell, and were trampled by horses and elephants. Among the killed was the brave colonel Fletcher ; colonel Baillie, and about two hundred Europeans, were taken prisoners, and exposed to every insult and cruelty that the ingenuity of barbarians could inflict, while nothing could exceed their sufferings but the magnanimous and indignant fortitude with which they were

but is
drawn into
an ambus-
cade.

Valour of
the British
troops.

Overpow-
ered by
numbers.

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Alarm at
Madras ;reaches
Calcutta.Sir Eyre
Coote sent
to com-
mand in
the Carna-
tic.Compara-
tively
small
army.

borne.^h This disaster threw the presidency into great consternation and terror ; they considered the Carnatic on the eve of being lost, and Madras itself in the greatest danger. Hyder soon resumed the siege of Arcot, took it by assault on the 3d of November, and, three days after, the citadel, though capable of a much longer defence if the nabob had been resolutely faithful. The successes of Hyder caused alarm even at Calcutta : the supreme council placed little reliance on the efforts of the Madras presidency, but having resolved to assist that settlement, and wishing to be assured of the proper application of their aid, they passed a resolution, entreating sir Eyre Coote, a member of their own body and commander in chief of the forces in India, to take the command of the army in the Carnatic. The governor general exerted himself to reinforce the army destined to act against Hyder, and to provide money for paying and supplying the troops. It was concerted that general Coote should sail immediately for Madras, while admiral Hughes should direct his operations against the ports and shipping of Hyder on the Malabar coast. Sir Eyre Coote arrived at Madras at the close of the year 1780, where he found affairs in a more dismal situation than he had conceived : Hyder Ally had taken every measure which could occur to the most experienced general,ⁱ to distress the British, and to render himself formidable. His military conduct was supported by a degree of political address unequalled by any prince or leader that had yet appeared in Hindostan : his army was now augmented to more than a hundred thousand men, while the force of general Coote did not exceed seven thousand. On the conduct of the general, invigorating and directing this small band, depended the fate of the Carnatic, and probably of all British India.

ENCOURAGED by his victories, Hyder had besieged the fortresses of Vellore, Wandewash, Permacoil, and Chingleput. Having called a council of war, composed of sir Hector Monro, lord Macleod, and general Stuart,

^h See narrative of the sufferings of the officers and men, Thomson's War in Asia, passim.

ⁱ This is the substance of Coote's first letter from Madras to the India directory.

the commander in chief consulted them whether it would be better to relieve these garrisons, or proceed immediately against the enemy's army. The former alternative was unanimously adopted, and in a few weeks the British general obliged Hyder to raise all the sieges, reinforced and supplied the garrisons. The French inhabitants of Pondicherry, notwithstanding the generous treatment which they had received from the English, behaved with the most ungrateful perfidy; they admitted a garrison in the interests of Hyder, and collected a large store of provision, evidently intended to support a fleet and army which were expected from the Mauritius; but Coote effectually crushed this nefarious project, by taking away their arms, destroying the boats, and removing the provisions.

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Plan of
operations
for 1781.

Successive
victories
of Coote
in the
Carnatic.

THESE operations, though attended with success, so exhausted the army of Coote, originally small, as to render an immediate attack upon the army of Mysore extremely imprudent, unless it should prove absolutely necessary. Hyder, on the other hand, finding his soldiers discouraged by the late victories of their adversaries, did not deem it expedient to compel the British to an engagement; and during several months no conflicts of any importance took place between the armies. Hyder at length being strongly reinforced, made preparations for the siege of Trichinopoly. Sir Eyre Coote proposed to march with the army to Porto Novo, as well that he might frustrate the design of the enemy, as to repress his depredation on the side of Tanjore and the southern provinces. The British army was small, and very indifferently provided for the field, but the situation of affairs admitted but of one alternative, either southern India must be abandoned, or an effort must be made for its preservation; and this was one of the cases which have often occurred in British history, in which the most adventurous boldness was the wisest policy.

IMPELLED by these considerations, the British general, with a small but valiant band, on the 16th of June set out in quest of the Mysorean myriads, and arrived at Porto Novo; thence he made an attempt on the fortress of Chillumbrum, but was obliged to retire: nevertheless,

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He resolved to persist in endeavouring to bring the enemy to battle, to which their commander was now much less indisposed than in the earlier part of the campaign. Hyder was so powerfully reinforced, that confident in his strength, and elated with the repulse of the English, he resolved to hazard an engagement, rather than relinquish his design on Trichinopoly and the adjacent provinces. Determined to fight, he advanced to meet the English army, and chose a very advantageous position within a short distance of Coote. One of the great difficulties of the English army was the impossibility of obtaining intelligence respecting the force and situation of the enemy. Clouds of Hyder's cavalry hovered round our camp, and overspread the country on all sides, farther than the eye could reach; therefore it was not only impracticable to send out a reconnoitring party, but even a single scout could not escape detection. Several men were despatched for intelligence, but none returned; and the British commander could procure no farther knowledge of the number and disposition of the enemy, than the short view from his own advanced posts admitted. Thus compelled to proceed in the dark, Coote could form no previous plan of action, but was obliged to trust entirely to his invention, which must instantaneously devise plans and expedients, according to the discoveries which he should make concerning the Mysoreans. Such are perhaps the most trying circumstances in which a general can be placed; they demand not merely courage, nor even the habitual skill of professional experience framing customary plans for common situations; extrication and success were to depend on genius, which must form and adapt its combinations to a new case, with a correspondent self-possession of faculties, and promptitude of execution. These qualities the fate of the Carnatic required in the commander to whom it was intrusted, and they were found in sir Eyre Coote.

Battle of
Porto
Novo.

On the 1st of July, at five in the morning, the British drums beat to arms; at seven, the troops, consisting of seventeen hundred Europeans, and three thousand five hundred Sepoys, marched out of the camp in two lines; the first being commanded by sir Hector Monro, and the

second by general Stuart. This body of five thousand two hundred, with a proportionable quantity of artillery, advanced to meet an enemy of seventy thousand, with a powerful train, directed by European officers. On the right was the sea; and on the left, numerous bodies of the enemy's cavalry as before precluded intelligence and observation. After an hour's march, our troops entered a plain, skirted by an eminence, on which the army of Hyder was posted, being flanked on both sides by strong batteries of artillery, and vigorously and skilfully fortified in front. The English general, from this position, saw that the success of his handful depended on the first impression; the design which he thence formed was to direct his efforts against a part, and cause a confusion which might extend to the rest of the army. With this view he narrowed his front, so arranged his men as to be nearly covered from the cannon of the enemy, and assailed their left wing diagonally: this prompt and happy movement decided the fortune of the day; attacked in such an unexpected manner, the Mysoreans were thrown into disorder. Hyder dexterously and speedily changed his front, in order to encounter the English with his whole force, and attempted at once to separate the British lines, and to surround them both. His dispositions for these purposes were masterly; but the respective efforts of Monro and Stuart, with the superintending conduct of Coote, proved invincible. The Mysoreans fought valiantly, but the British continuing to pursue the advantage which their first attack had produced, after an obstinate contest of seven hours, put the enemy completely to the route, and obtained a decisive victory. The battle of Porto Novo will ever be accounted an important epoch in the history of British India: it broke the spell which the defeat of colonel Baille had formed, destroyed the awe that was attached to the name of Hyder Ally, and by its effects, both on the relative power and authority of the belligerent parties, may be considered as the salvation of India.^k "So little," says the historian of the war in Asia, "can human sagacity penetrate into the maze of future events,

Able plan of attack by the British general.

Conduct and valour of the enemy.

Complete victory of the British.

Important effects.

^k See Thompson's War in Asia, p. 255—266.

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.1781.

Coote re-
stores the
British af-
fairs in the
Carnatic.

“that the repulse at Chillumbrum, which seemed pregnant with danger, by encouraging Hyder to venture an engagement, changed the whole face of our affairs in the Carnatic.”

COOTE being soon reinforced by a body of troops from Bengal, reduced Passore, a place of considerable importance, and well stored with provisions. Meanwhile Hyder, being joined by his son Tippoo with a fresh supply of troops, hazarded a second battle; but on the 27th of August, after displaying his usual skill and intrepidity, he was again defeated. Undismayed by these losses, he ventured a third engagement on the 27th of September, in which British prowess continued triumphant. He even afterwards manifested a wish for a fresh trial, but found his troops so disheartened as not to second his desire. He was now compelled to retreat into the interior country, to abandon the advantages of the former year, and to leave the English possessions in undoubted security. Such was the change effected by the ability and conduct of sir Eyre Coote in 1781.¹

Admiral
Hughes
destroys
Hyder's
fleet,and redu-
ces the
Dutch set-
tlements
on the Ma-
labar coast.

MEANWHILE sir Edward Hughes by his naval efforts powerfully cooperated in annoying the enemies of England; he destroyed Hyder's shipping in his own ports, and thereby blasted in the bud his hopes of becoming a maritime power. Informed of the war with Holland, he immediately attacked the Dutch settlement of Negapatam, which was defended by five hundred Europeans, seven hundred Malays, four thousand five hundred Sepoys, and two thousand three hundred of Hyder's troops. Admiral Hughes was in this expedition assisted by a land force under sir Hector Munro: their joint efforts reduced this place in three weeks, acquired a very considerable booty, and compelled Hyder to evacuate Tanjore. About the same time, the British factory in the island of Sumatra, with the assistance of captain Clements and a small squadron of ships, subdued all the Dutch settlements on the west coasts of the island.

IN Europe, the Bourbon princes, reinforced by the Dutch, formed a comprehensive plan of operations; they propos-

¹ Annual Register, 1781.

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Europe—
Plans of
the house
of Bourbon
when rein-
forced by
the Dutch.
The
French in-
vade the
island of
Jersey.
At first
successful;
but are
finally re-
pulsed.

ed. to subdue Jersey, to attack our naval armaments on our own coast, to invade Minorca, and accomplish the reduction of Gibraltar. In January, the baron de Rullecourt invaded the island of Jersey, and leaving a small garrison at Grouville, marched to St. Helier. Having besieged the avenues of the town, he surprised the guard in the dark, and possessed the market place without noise; and at the break of day, the inhabitants were astonished to find themselves in the hands of the enemy. Major Corbet, deputy governor, with the magistrates and principal inhabitants, being brought prisoners to the court house, the French commander wrote terms of capitulation, by which the island was to be surrendered to France, the troops to lay down their arms, and to be conveyed to England. The lieutenant governor represented, that no act could have the smallest validity in his present situation, and that the officers and troops were too well informed of their duty to pay any regard to his acts while a prisoner; but his remonstrance was unavailing, Rullecourt was peremptory in his demand, and Corbet, under the impression of the moment, too precipitately signed the capitulation.^m The French commander summoned Elizabeth castle to surrender on the prescribed terms; but this fortress was preserved by the conduct and fortitude of captains Aylward and Mulcaster, who having retired thither at the first alarm, prepared against a sudden attack, rejected the summons with great spirit, and peremptorily refused to pay the smallest regard to the capitulation, or to any orders which should be issued by the lieutenant governor in his present circumstances. Meanwhile the alarm extended, and the nearest troops rushed with the utmost expedition towards the point of danger, and immediately formed on an eminence near the town, under the conduct of major Pierson of the ninety-fifth regiment. Rullecourt required the British commander immediately to yield; the gallant officer replied, that if the French leader and troops did not within twenty minutes lay down their arms and surrender themselves prisoners of war, he should attack them the instant that period was expired. Pierson

^m Annual Register, 1781.

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made a very masterly disposition of his forces, and when the specified time was elapsed, began the conflict with such an union of impetuosity and skill as soon gained a decisive victory. The French general being mortally wounded, the next in command seeing the hopelessness of their situation, requested the lieutenant governor to resume his authority, and to accept of their surrender as prisoners of war. The satisfaction arising from this victory was greatly diminished by the fall of the hero to whom it was owing; fighting at the head of conquering troops, the gallant Pierson was killed in the twenty-fifth year of his age. The redoubt at Grouville was immediately attacked and retaken, and the whole of the French invading party was either killed or taken prisoners: thus ended the second attempt of France on the island of Jersey.

Blockade
of Gibralt-
ar.

THE blockade of Gibraltar continued, and notwithstanding the supply of provisions which had been brought by admiral Rodney in the preceding year, the garrison began to feel the distresses of restricted food: so early as October 1780, the governor had been obliged to deduct a quarter of a pound from each man's daily allowance of bread, and to confine the consumption of meat to a pound and a half a week, which, from being so long kept, was now scarcely eatable. The inhabitants were reduced to still greater difficulties; after the supply which the English fleet had brought, and even earlier, not a single vessel arrived with provisions or necessaries, either from the neighbouring shores of Barbary, or any of the more distant coasts of Africa; so that, with every other misfortune, they were at once cut off from that great and long established source of a cheap and plentiful market, and reduced to depend entirely for relief on the casual arrival of a few small Minorcan vessels, whose cargoes were insufficient, and prices immoderate." To this distressing

n The following account, copied from the Annual Register of 1782, and with the usual accuracy of that valuable performance, clearly illustrates the distressed state of the garrison:—"Of the most common and indispensable necessaries of life; bad ship biscuit, full of worms, was sold at a shilling a pound; flour and beef, in not much better condition, at the same price; old dried pease at a third more; the worst salt, half dirt, the sweepings of ships' bottoms and store houses, at eight-pence; old Irish salt butter at half a crown; the worst

situation both the soldiers and inhabitants submitted, not only without murmur, but with universal cheerfulness. In such circumstances, the interest and honour of Britain required, that one of the first measures of the campaign should be the relief of Gibraltar; and early in spring, a great fleet, under the conduct of the admirals Darby, Digby, and sir J. Lockhart Ross, was fitted out for this service. The French and Spaniards boasted that they would defeat the execution of this design; thereby conceiving a vain hope of deterring Britain from the attempt. The English fleet consisted of twenty-eight sail of the line. A French armament of twenty-six ships was ready at Brest, while thirty Spanish ships were parading in the bay of Cadiz. France was much more intent on her own designs of overpowering the British in America and the West Indies, and cooperating with the native powers of East, than on seconding the project of Spain against Gibraltar; instead of seeking a junction with the fleet of her allies, she sent her principal naval force, under count de Grasse, to the western world, and a strong squadron under Suffrein to the eastern. The British fleet left St. Helens on the 13th of March, and were obliged to delay some days on the coast of Ireland, waiting for victuallers from Cork. It had also under its convoy the East and West India fleets: having conducted these merchantmen beyond the reach of the enemy's fleets, admiral Darby steered for Gibraltar with his naval force, and ninety-seven victuallers. On the 12th of April he arrived off Cadiz, where he saw the Spanish fleet lying at anchor, and evidently disposed to afford him no opposition. The British admiral having sent forward the convoy under cover of a few men of war and frigates, cruised with his

The British fleet supplies the garrison with provisions.

sort of brown sugar brought the same price; and English farthing candles were sold at six-pence a piece.

"But fresh provisions bore still more exorbitant prices, even when the arrival of vessels from the Mediterranean opened a market: turkeys sold at three pounds twelve shillings a piece; sucking pigs at two guineas; ducks at half a guinea; and small hens sold at nine shillings a piece. A guinea was refused for a calf's pluck; and one pound seven shillings asked for an ox's head. To heighten every distress, the firing was so nearly exhausted as scarcely to afford a sufficiency for the most indispensable culinary purposes; so that all the linen of the town and garrison was washed in cold water, and worn without ironing. This want was severely felt in the wet season, which, notwithstanding the general warmth of the climate, is exceedingly cold at Gibraltar."

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The Spaniards resolve to attempt its reduction by storm. Immense preparations for that purpose. Constant cannonade and bombardment.

fleet off the streights, in hopes of enticing the enemy to hazard an engagement; but the Spanish armament remained in its former station. A vexatious, though not formidable enemy greatly annoyed the British fleet; during the siege several gun boats, constructed at Algeziras on the western side of Gibraltar bay, by night crossed and fired on the town and garrison. When the convoy was in the bay, about twenty of these boats sailed, under the benefit of a calm, every morning from Algeziras, and with a fixed and steady aim regularly cannonaded and bombarded our ships; but as soon as the wind at its stated hour began to spring up, they immediately fled, and were pursued in vain. These efforts were merely troublesome, without effecting any material damage to the shipping, and the garrison was completely supplied. Enraged at this disappointment of her expectations to reduce Gibraltar by blockade, Spain redoubled her exertions for compassing her object by force. She raised the most stupendous works, and placed on them the most formidable artillery that had ever been employed in a siege: a hundred and seventy pieces of cannon, and eighty mortars, poured their fire upon Elliot's brave garrison. This dreadful cannonade and bombardment was continued night and day for many months, without intermission. Nothing, it was said and may well be conceived, could be more terribly sublime than the view and report of this scene to those who observed them from the neighbouring hills of Barbary and Spain, during the night, especially in the beginning, when the cannonade of the enemy being returned with still superior power by general Elliot, the whole rock seemed to vomit out fire, and all distinction of parts were lost in flame and smoke. While the fleet continued in the bay, general Elliot retorted the enemy's attack with a prodigious shower of fire; but as it was a standing maxim with that experienced and wise commander, never to waste his ammunition, and as the great and evidently increasing difficulty of supply rendered this caution still more essentially necessary, he soon retrenched in that respect, and seemed to behold unconcerned the fury and violence of the enemy. It was calculated, that during three weeks the Spaniards expended fifty ton of

powder each day: after that time, however, they relaxed their efforts, and were more sparing in the consumption of ammunition. The impression made on the garrison by these exertions was very disproportionate to the labour and expense of the enemy. The whole loss, from the 12th of April to the end of June, amounted to only one commissioned officer and fifty-two private men killed, and to seven officers and two hundred and fifty-three privates wounded. The damage of the works was too trifling to give any concern to the defenders, but the duty and fatigue were extremely great. The town suffered dreadful damage: the inhabitants consisted of various nations and religions; the English amounted only to five hundred, the Roman catholics to near two thousand, and the Jews were little short of nine hundred. Those who escaped destruction from the cannonade and bombardment embraced every opportunity of leaving so dangerous a situation, and removed either to England or to the neighbouring countries. However the Spaniards found they might destroy the lives and effects of individuals, they could not advance their object by all their operose labour, and therefore towards the close of the summer suspended their efforts.

GENERAL ELLIOT meanwhile appeared to employ himself in strengthening his defences, while he was really meditating a terrible blow on the camp of the enemy. Having seen that the preparations of the Spaniards were arrived at the highest possible perfection, he conceived a project of frustrating all their mighty efforts, by attacking, storming, and destroying their works. He employed the greatest part of autumn in making the most complete arrangements for executing the whole and every part of this grand design. His object was to attack the fortifications on every side at the same instant: to effect this purpose, he distributed his various forces where the several parts could respectively be most efficient, and in such relative positions as rendered cooperation most easy, expeditious, and impressive. To fertility of invention, the genius of Elliot united a comprehensiveness of mind, which grasped objects in all their bearings and relations, cool and vigorous judgment, and nice discrimination; with the greatest exactness he adjusted his plan in all departments, and

General
Elliot.

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Sally of
Nov. 27th,

entirely
destroys
the ene-
my's pre-
parations.

made provisions for every probable contingency. The time he fixed for his enterprise was a night during the darkness of winter. On the 27th of November, at three in the morning, the British force marched in the following order: the troops were divided into three columns; the centre was commanded by the Hanoverian lieutenant colonel Dachenhausen, the column on the right by lieutenant colonel Hugo of the same corps, and the body on the left by lieutenant colonel Trig of the 12th regiment; the reserve was led by major Maxwell of the 73d; a party of seamen, in two divisions, was conducted by the lieutenants Campbell and Muckle of the Brilliant and Porcupine royal frigates; and the whole body was headed by brigadier general Ross. In each column there was an advanced corps, a body of pioneers, a party of artillerymen carrying combustibles, a sustaining corps, and a reserve in the rear. With such silence did they march, that the enemy had not the smallest suspicion of their approach, until an universal attack conveyed the tremendous intimation. The ardour of our troops was every where irresistible: the Spaniards, astonished, confounded, and dismayed, fled with the utmost precipitation, and abandoned those immense works of so much labour, time, and expense. The whole efforts of Spanish power and skill for two years, the chief object of their pride and exultation, were in two hours destroyed by British genius directing British intrepidity, ardour, and skill. The most wonderful exertions were made by the pioneers and artillerymen, who spread their fire with such astonishing rapidity, that in half an hour two mortar batteries of ten thirteen inch mortars, the batteries of heavy cannon, with all the lines of approach, communication, and traverse, were in flames, and every thing subject to the action of fire was finally reduced to ashes. The mortars and cannon were spiked, and their beds, carriages, and platforms destroyed, The magazines blew up one after another in the course of the conflagration. Before daybreak the British force, having completely executed their grand project, returned to the garrison.

ADMIRAL DARBY having, in vain, endeavoured to draw the Spanish fleet to an engagement, after relieving

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Darby endeavours to bring the enemy's fleet to battle, but in vain. The combined fleet of forty-nine ships of the line sails to the channel.

Gibraltar returned to protect the channel. Meanwhile monsieur de Guisquen, understanding that the British fleet no longer intervened between Brest and Cadiz, sailed with eighteen ships of the line to join the Spanish fleet, and to support it in the invasion of Minorca; which, next to Gibraltar, was the principal European object of Spanish ambition. They set sail for Cadiz in the end of July, having ten thousand land forces on board; proceeding with these to the Mediterranean, they left them at Minorca, and returning to the Atlantic, directed their course to the English channel, with forty-nine ships of the line. Their reasons for taking this direction were various: they proposed to prevent succours from being sent to Minorca, and to intercept our homeward bound fleets, which were expected at this time to return, and a large outward bound convoy on the eve of sailing from Cork. So little had we foreseen or suspected their design, that the combined fleets had formed a line from Ushant to the Scilly islands, to bar the entrance into the channel, before it was known in England that they were arrived in the ocean. Admiral Darby, then in the channel, had almost fallen in with the enemy, with only twenty ships of the line, when the accidental meeting of a neutral vessel informed him of their situation and force. The British admiral returned to Torbay to wait for reinforcements, and instructions from the admiralty. His fleet was soon joined by so many ships as to amount to thirty-sail of the line: he now received orders to put to sea for the protection of the homeward bound merchantmen; but, as the enemy was so much superior, to avoid a close and decisive engagement, unless absolutely necessary for the preservation of the convoy. Meanwhile the French admiral proposed to attack the British fleet in its station at Torbay, but was overruled by his Spanish colleague. That commander represented the state both of the ships and men, of whom, especially the Spaniards, great numbers were sick, as depriving them really of that superiority which they possessed in appearance. They therefore directed their attention entirely to the interception of British merchandise. But very stormy weather obliged them

The British fleet of thirty ships of the line keeps the sea.

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to return, in the beginning of September, to Brest, where the French going into port, the Spaniards proceeded to their own coasts. Darby, after conducting the expected merchantmen into harbour, returned himself to Plymouth in November.

Admiral
Kempen-
feldt inter-
cepts a
French
convoy.

THE French refitted their fleet with the utmost expedition. Notwithstanding the lateness of the season, they proposed to reinforce count de Grasse with both troops and ships of war in the west, and to support him with stores; to reinforce and supply Suffrein in the east; and to rejoin the Spanish fleet, that they might prevent England from relieving Minorca. The several squadrons and convoys were ordered to sail together as far as their course lay in the same direction. The British admiral heard of this preparation and its objects, but without being accurately informed of its force, which amounted to nineteen ships of the line. They despatched admiral Kempenfeldt with twelve ships of the line, one fifty gun ship, and four frigates, to intercept the French squadron and convoy. The British admiral descried the enemy on the 12th of December, when the fleet and convoy were dispersed by a hard gale of wind, and the latter considerably behind. He endeavoured to avail himself of this situation, by first cutting off the convoy, and afterwards fighting the fleet. For the intended service, admiral Kempenfeldt's number of frigates was much too small; notwithstanding this deficiency, however, twenty transports and storeships, were captured, containing eleven hundred land forces, seven hundred seamen, a great quantity of ordnance, arms, warlike stores, camp equipage, clothing, and provisions; many ships were also dispersed. The French admiral, meanwhile, endeavoured to collect his fleet, and form a line, but night came on before he could accomplish his purpose. Kempenfeldt, still ignorant of the force of the enemy, made preparations for fighting the next morning. At daylight, perceiving them to leeward, he formed his line; but, on a nearer approach, discovering their strength, he thought it prudent to decline an engagement. The enemy did not appear so confident in their superior numbers as to urge the British to battle: both fleets therefore parted, as if by

mutual consent. Valuable as was the capture achieved by Kempenfeldt, yet great dissatisfaction was excited in England against the admiralty, for not furnishing that gallant commander with a force which might have seized the convoy, and vanquished the French fleet: there were ships, they said, lying idle in harbour, which ought to have been employed in this service.

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THE war with Holland required in Europe a considerable diversion of our naval force. The Dutch were fortunately very little prepared for hostilities, and extremely deficient in seamen and naval stores, in which they had heretofore so greatly abounded. The objects arising from war with them were, by cutting off their sources of naval supply from the north, to prevent the restoration of their marine, to destroy their immense commerce from those quarters, to protect our own, and to prevent their intercourse with our enemies in southern Europe. For these purposes a fleet was stationed in the North Seas, under admiral Hyde Parker. In the beginning of June, the Dutch endeavoured to prepare such a fleet as should protect their own Baltic trade, and intercept ours. On the 19th of July, admiral Zoutman sailed from the Texel, with eight ships of the line, ten very large frigates, and five sloops. Admiral Parker was now on his return from Elsinour, with a convoy under his protection; his squadron consisted of six ships of the line, of which two were in very bad condition, and several frigates.

War with
Holland.

EARLY on the fifth of August, the fleets came in sight of each other off the Dogger Bank; Parker perceiving the strength of the enemy, ordered his convoy to make the best of their way, and sent his frigates for their protection: the Dutch admiral having used the same precaution, prepared for battle and both parties appeared eager for a close engagement. They advanced to meet each other in gloomy silence, without firing a gun until they were within pistol shot. The Dutch were superior both in number of ships and weight of metal; but the British admiral, notwithstanding this inferiority, made the battle a trial of force, rather than of skill. Indeed both parties were so extremely eager to display national valour, as to supersede all dexter-

Action off
the Dogger
Bank.

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ity of manœuvre. For three hours and forty minutes did they fight without intermission, ranged abreast of each other; the conflict was extremely bloody; of the English five hundred were killed or wounded, but the Dutch lost upwards of eleven hundred men. Though the enemy long kept the sea with astonishing firmness and intrepidity, yet the English were evidently superior; one of the best ships of the Dutch was sunk, and two more so much damaged as to be for ever unfit for service. Though the British ships were greatly shattered, yet none of them were hurt beyond the possibility of reparation. The Dutch convoy was scattered, and compelled to return home instead of pursuing its course. The voyage to the Baltic was of necessity abandoned, all means of procuring naval stores were cut off, and the immense carrying trade between the northern and southern nations, of Europe, which, along with their fisheries, had been the great source of the Dutch power and wealth, was for this year annihilated. Though the result of the engagement, on the whole, proved favourable to England, and the valour, displayed in the action was highly and generally approved, yet the admiralty was severely blamed for not furnishing admiral Parker with a sufficient force. There were as many ships idle, either at Chatham or in the Downs, as if they had joined Parker, would have enabled him to bring the Dutch fleet and convoy into England. The admiral himself appears to have been by no means satisfied with the support which he had received; he resigned his command, and on that occasion did not conceal his sentiments.*

Expedition
of commodore John-
stone to
the cape
of Good
Hope;

COMMODORE JOHNSTONE was appointed to command a squadron destined to annoy the Dutch in another quarter, by attacking the cape of Good Hope, a settlement extremely valuable to the United Provinces: thence he was to proceed to the Spanish settlement of Buenos Ayres, in the Rio de la Plata of South America, where a dangerous insurrection had given great alarm to the court of Madrid. The Dutch, conscious of their inability to defend the cape, applied for assistance to France. The court of Versailles being also deeply interested in preventing Britain from obtaining so

* See Annual Register, 1781.

important a possession, ordered monsieur de Suffrein, in his way to India, to watch the motions of the British squadron. Commodore Johnstone's naval force consisted of a seventy-four, a sixty-four, and three fifty gun ships, besides several frigates, a bomb vessel, a fireship, and some sloops of war. The land force was composed of three new regiments, of a thousand men each: several outward bound East Indiamen and store ordnance vessels went out with this convoy; and the whole fleet, including transports and armed ships, amounted to more than forty sail. With these commodore Johnstone stopped at cape de Verd Islands, for water and fresh provisions: for collecting these supplies, a great part of the crews, apprehending no enemy to be near, were dispersed on shore. The French squadron, which consisted of five ships of the line, with a body of land forces, being informed of the situation of the British, expected to take them by surprise. On the 16th of April, Suffrein leaving his convoy at a distance attacked the British squadron in Port Praya, in the island of St. Jago. He advanced as if to certain victory, but was soon taught his mistake: the British force, though surprised, was so far from being intimidated, that they not only rallied, but entirely beat off the enemy, with great loss of men and damage to the shipping. Suffrein, disappointed in this attempt, made the best of his way to the cape, where, by his junction with the Dutch garrison, he knew he should be able to defend it against Johnstone's armament. The British commodore, finding on his arrival that success would be impracticable, forbore the attempt. Soon after, meeting with five richly laden homeward bound Dutch East Indiamen, he took four, and burnt the other: when, perceiving that he could not compass the original purpose of his expedition, he returned to England with his prizes.

he captures valuable prizes

THE West Indies, after being the theatre of the hostilities which have been recently narrated, experienced a most terrible enemy in the warring elements. This was a hurricane, far exceeding in tremendous horror and dreadful destruction the usual convulsions of the torrid zone.

West Indies.

Tremendous hurricane in the Leeward Islands;

On the 10th of October 1780, this engine of devastation commenced its fell movements in the island of Barbadoes. Thunder and lightning, whirlwinds, earthquakes,

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Jamaica.

torrents of rain, fire, air, earth, and water, appeared to vie with each other in rapidity of desolation. The first night, Bridgetown, the capital of the island, was levelled with the ground. Other towns, as well as villages and single houses, shared the same fate: plantations were destroyed, the produce of the earth was torn up, animals perished, and numbers of human beings fell either victims to the fury of the elements, or to the downfall of buildings.^p The fear of a pestilence, from the multitude of dead bodies in so putrifying a climate, compelled the survivors instantaneously to bury the dead, without allowing to relations and friends the melancholy pleasure of a distinguishing attention to the objects of their affection. The negroes by rapine and violence added to the general calamity, and as they were much more numerous than the whites, might have utterly ruined the island, had not general Vaughan with a considerable body of troops been stationed upon it, and awed those barbarians to quietness and obedience. The prisons being involved in the common destruction, the late tenants of those mansions, who had been confined for violating the laws, joined in the outrages; but the prisoners of war, especially a party of Spaniards, acted with the greatest humanity and honour, in assisting the distressed inhabitants and preserving public order. The islands of St. Lucie, Grenada, St. Vincents, and Dominica, were also desolated. The French islands in the same quarter of the West Indies, especially Martinique and Guadaloupe, suffered no less than the English.^q But a still more direful hurricane, on the 3d of October, wreaked its vengeance on Jamaica, and especially on the districts of Westmoreland and Hanover, two of the most fertile spots in the island. The inhabitants of Savannah la Mar, a considerable trading town in that quarter, were beholding with astonishment such a swell

^p Annual Register. 1781.

^q It is remarkable, that in the same month some parts of the country in the vicinity of London experienced a tornado very unusual in this northern climate. The storm burst on Hammersmith, Richmond, Kingston, and the environs. At Hammersmith it blew down a considerable part of the church, though very strongly built, and both there and at other places damaged a number of houses. The same day a much more violent tempest raged on the coast of Normandy.—See Chronicle in the Annual Register 1780, and Gentleman's Magazine for October in the same year.

of the sea as had never before been seen, when, on a sudden, the waters of the deep, bursting through all bounds, overwhelmed the town, and swept man, beast and habitation in one torrent of destruction. What the waters did not reach in the higher vicinity, combined tempest and earthquake finished. Besides present desolation, this dreadful scourge, by covering the most fertile tracts with sand and other barren substances, sterilised the ground, and rendered it unsusceptible of future culture. The loss of property was estimated at upwards of a million sterling in two parishes in Jamaica. Their neighbours endeavoured to alleviate the miseries of the sufferers; but their principal and most effectual relief they derived from the mother country, in the generous benefactions of individuals, and the liberal munificence of the legislature.

Humane
endea-
vours to al-
leviate the
distresses.

ADMIRAL RODNEY was fortunately at New York at this terrible season, and returned at the close of the year to the West Indies. Having concerted his plan of operation with general Vaughan, he, together with that commander, undertook an expedition for the recovery of St. Vincents, in the expectation of finding its fortifications dismantled, and its garrison impaired by the recent hurricane. Having however reconnoitred, and finding both the works and garrison in such force as to require more time for reduction than its comparative value justified, he therefore desisted from the attempt. No sooner had Britain been compelled to go to war with Holland, than ministers, with a meritorious policy, projected to strike a blow, which should prove fatal to the commercial resources of her ungrateful enemy. The Dutch island of St. Eustatius, though itself a barren rock, had long been the seat of an immense and lucrative commerce: it was a general market and magazine to all nations; its largest gains were, during the seasons of war, among its neighbours, as it then derived from its neutrality unbounded freedom of trade. The property on a settlement so circumstanced was known to be extremely great: to the acquisition of such valuable spoils, therefore, government directed its views, and sent instructions to the commanders to make an attempt on the opulent repository. As the place was naturally strong, with the assistance of the French it

The cam-
paign
opens.

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Capture of
St. Eusta-
tius.

might have been rendered able to withstand an attack. Our commanders, to anticipate reinforcements, and at the same time deceive the enemy, first pretended a design of assailing Martinico; but suddenly appearing before the island of St. Eustatius, they surrounded it with a great force.

The admiral and general summoned the governor to surrender, with which demand that officer very prudently complied, and recommended the town and inhabitants to the known clemency of the British conquerors. The wealth found in this place was estimated on a moderate calculation at three millions sterling. Soon after, a convoy of Dutch merchantmen richly laden were captured by three of Rodney's ships, and the prizes estimated at about six hundred thousand pounds sterling. About this time, some enterprising adventurers from Bristol, with a squadron of privateers, sailed to Surinam, and under the guns of the Dutch forts brought away every valuable ship from the settlements of Demarara and Issequibo. Thus Holland, in the destruction of her commerce, was taught the folly of provoking to hostilities the most powerful maritime state of the universe.

De Grasse
arrives in
the West
Indies.

THE court of Versailles formed the same project this campaign, which had been defeated in the preceding, to overpower the English force in the West Indies, and afterwards compel Britain to relinquish North America. There were already eight ships of the line at St. Domingo and Martinico, with a considerable body of land forces. On the 22d of March, count de Grasse, with twenty sail of the line, one of fifty-four guns, and six thousand land forces, sailed for the West Indies, with an immense convoy, amounting to two hundred and fifty ships, and arrived off Martinico. In the end of April, sir George Rodney having detached three of his ships to escort the St. Eustatius booty to Britain under commodore Hotham, had only twenty-one ships of the line, while De Grasse, being reinforced from Martinico, had twenty-four. Rod-

r British merchants being proprietors of some parts of the property captured in the Dutch settlements, considerable disputes arose between them and the admiral on this subject. It is remarkable, that in one of the letters written on this occasion, Rodney prophesied that Demarara would in a few years very far surpass in value the expectations which were then entertained. This prediction, though then thought improbable, has been since amply verified.

1781.

Admiral Hood detached by Rodney, offers battle to the French.

They do not venture a close engagement.

ney himself remaining with general Vaughan at St. Eustatius, sent sir Samuel Hood towards Martinico, in order to intercept de Grasse's fleet and convoy. On the 28th of April, admiral Hood was informed by his advanced cruisers, that the enemy were approaching in the channel between St. Lucie and Martinico. The next morning he descried the fleet before the convoy; and though he had only eighteen ships of the line to twenty-four, and the enemy had the wind in their favour, the British commander determined to hazard an engagement. With great skill and dexterity he endeavoured to gain the wind, and come to close battle. De Grasse, however, would not venture a decisive action, and from his windward position being enabled to preserve the distance which he chose, began to cannonade so far from the British ships as to admit of little execution on either side. During the first conflict, the British van, however, and the foremost ships of the centre, after repeated endeavours, at last succeeded in approaching nearer to the enemy, and having received a very heavy fire, were considerably damaged in their masts, hulls, and rigging, before the rest of our ships came up to their assistance. Finding his wounded ships in a very shattered condition, admiral Hood thought it prudent during the night to sail for Antigua. The marquis de Bouillé attempted, in the absence of our fleet, to reduce St. Lucie on the 10th of May; but by the vigorous resistance of the garrison he was compelled to relinquish the design. Admiral Rodney now found it necessary, instead of spending more time at St. Eustatius, to employ his whole force against the French armament; he therefore immediately sailed to Antigua, and as soon as the ships were repaired, proceeded towards Barbadoes.

On the very day that sir George Rodney with the fleets from Antigua arrived at Barbadoes, a small French squadron, with a considerable body of land forces, under the conduct of M. de Blanchelande, late governor of St. Vincents, appeared off the island of Tobago. On the 23d of May, the day on which the enemy appeared, Mr. George Fergusson, the governor, sent the intelligence to Rodney, which the admiral received on the 26th. The

A French armament invades Tobago.

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Character
and gallant
defence of
governor
FergussonHis judi-
cious and
kind treat-
ment of his
negroes;

naval commander imagined the force of the enemy much less considerable than it was, and on that supposition destined six sail of the line and some frigates, under admiral Drake, with about six hundred land forces, for its relief. That officer having arrived on the 30th off Tobago, descried between him and the land the enemy's fleet, consisting of twenty-four sail of the line. Finding it impossible to attempt a landing, he retired, and sent the commander in chief intelligence of the posture of affairs. Meanwhile, about three thousand French troops landed on the island. The defenders, including a few soldiers and the colonial militia, amounted only to four hundred and twenty-seven whites; but they found most faithful and intrepid auxiliaries in their blacks. Governor Fergusson^s himself was distinguished for his treatment of negroes, the joint result of judgment and humanity, by which he secured the obedience, while he conciliated the affection, and established the fidelity of his labourers. His precept and example influencing other planters, rendered the condition of the blacks much more comfortable than in most of the other settlements, and attached to their masters, hearts very susceptible of kind impressions. The island, however, not being far advanced in cultivation, the number of negroes fit to bear arms was but small. The gallant Fergusson made a skilful and vigorous defence against an enemy four times the number of his brave band. Trusting that his message would bring effectual succour, he occupied a strong post, and for seven days prevented the enemy from making progress. The marquis de Bouillé, commander of the invaders, found all attempts to dislodge his opponents vain; wherefore, to reduce them to submission, he began to destroy their plantations. The islanders, seeing the approaching devastation of their property, were awed to concessions, which the fear of personal danger could not extort, and at last agreed to capitulate. The firmness of the governor restraining them from precipitate offers, procured honourable and advantageous terms. Admiral Rodney did not escape censure

^s Brother to the colonel, who lived and died so honourably.---See this history, chap. xxv.

for not having adopted more effectual measures for the relief of Tobago ; and it was asserted with some reason, that the French, without a great superiority of naval force, had in this campaign acquired a most important advantage in the West Indies. From the capture of Tobago in the beginning of June, to the beginning of August, de Grasse continued in the West Indies, without being encountered by Rodney ; and in July sailed to St. Domingo, where, after being reinforced by five ships of the line, he escorted the rich mercantile convoy, with a fleet amounting to twenty-eight ships of the line. He conducted the convoy northwards until they were out of danger, and proceeded himself to the second object of his expedition. Rodney, conceiving that his health required an immediate return to his native country, escorted the West India convoy home, and sent the greater part of his fleet, under sir Samuel Hood, to watch the motions of de Grasse.

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overpow-
ered by
numbers,
he yields to
an honour-
able ca-
pitulation.

WHILE these operations were carrying on between the French and British among the eastern settlements of the West Indies, the Spaniards were not inactive in the western. Elated with their successful attack against the British settlements on the Mississippi, they had extended their views to West Florida. In the year 1780, they had captured the fort of Bobille, on the confines of Florida ; and in 1781, preparing a considerable armament from the Havannah, they resolved to besiege Pensacola. The enemy on their first departure were dispersed by a hurricane, but soon refitting, again set sail with eight thousand land forces, and fifteen ships of the line. On the 9th of March they arrived at Pensacola. Mr. Chester, governor of the province, and general Campbell, governor of the town, with a garrison not exceeding three thousand men including inhabitants, made the most skilful dispositions for the defence of the place. The enemy were near two months, employed against Pensacola, before they were prepared for a general assault ; and though they must ultimately, from the vast superiority of their numbers, have prevailed, yet the courage and activity of the garrison would have withstood their efforts much longer, had not their principal redoubt been accidentally blown up by the falling of a bomb at the door of the magazine, which set fire to

The Span-
iards re-
duce West
Florida.

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Last efforts
of Britain
for the re-
covery of
North
America.

Misinfor-
mation and
false con-
clusions of
painters.

the powder. The garrison now finding that farther defence was hopeless, next morning agreed to capitulate, being the 9th of May, exactly two months after the siege commenced; and thus the province of West Florida became a possession of Spain.

THE history now comes to the last exertions of Britain for the recovery of North America;---efforts glorious to the valour of her champions, but terminating in events melancholy to the national interests. Ministry had uniformly been remarkable, during the American war, for misapprehending situations and events, overrating partial advantages, and conceiving them to be general and decisive. The reduction of Charleston, and compulsory submission of South Carolina, they considered as certain indications of her future success, and of the desire of the colonists to return to their connexion with the parent country. They received the exaggerations of deserters from America as authentic testimony, and gave to the effusions of disappointed pride and resentment, a belief due only to the impartial narratives of truth. The defection of Arnold elevated their hopes of recovering the colonies; they considered his manifesto describing both the weakness and discontent of the American army, as unquestionable evidence.^t Proceeding on such superficial views

^t The following extract from a letter written by a respectable field officer of the guards, dated New York, August the 24th, 1781, illustrates the opinion which was entertained by impartial observers on the spot, concerning the information and conduct of ministry, with prophetic sagacity predicts the event:

"Well, here I am once more, wrapt up in military nonsense; for what but nonsense must be the science of *destroying mankind*, when taylor and shoemakers start up generals, and dare to oppose us regularly bred practitioners: however, "*ex nihilo nihil fit*," and these self-created heroes have the less merit, as we have learnt to bear and forbear, and even turn the left cheek where the right has been smitten.

"Now, my good friend, I lament that it is not in my power to send you much consolation from here. The strange and unaccountable infatuation that attends our sagacious ministers at home, (who seem to embrace every phantom, merely that they may be deceived,) will indubitably assist others on this side of the Atlantic in bringing this rebellion to a most dishonourable conclusion. To enter into a particular detail of all our follies, &c. &c. would take up a volume; but I should wish to give you some idea of our present situation at New York.---When I left England it was confidently asserted by those who ought to have known better "that the rebel army was scarce existing; that the people in general was in a state of the utmost misery and despondency, their finances totally exhausted, without credit, without trade, or the means of procuring the common necessities of life; and, at the same time, general inclination to submit to the mercy of Great Britain."---This was the language on the 1st of last April: I own that was a day on which it is usual for the unwary passenger to be held up to ridicule by much greater fools than himself.

and feeble reasoning, they formed their expectations and plans. It was apprehended that general Clinton, from the supposed weakness and disaffection of Washington's army, would not only be able to afford that body full employment in the vicinity of New York, but also to cooperate powerfully with the southern force, overpower the Americans who were still refractory, and enable the well affected (according to the ministerial hypothesis so often disproved by fact, the majority) to declare their sentiments, and assert their loyalty. On this theory the plan of the campaign was constructed: its principal and prominent object was, that lord Cornwallis should pervade the

Object and
plan of the
campaign
1781.

"With respect to the rebels: at no period of time since the commencement of this infamous rebellion, have the Americans fitted out so many large ships as within these eight months: their success (thanks to our navy) has answered their most sanguine expectations. Their trade from Philadelphia to the Havannah and the West Indies has been very great, although it is in the power of two frigates to secure the entrance into the river Delaware. The success of the Spaniards at Pensacola was entirely owing to the constant supplies of flour they received from the rebels, without which they could not have subsisted their army. With respect to the misery of the people, I leave you to judge how great it must be, when beef and mutton sell at the rate of two-pence a pound in the Jerseys, while we in New York pay two shillings: other things in proportion.--- The depreciation of their paper money is now so far from being a loss to them, that it is a very great advantage, as, by the constant circulation of many hundred thousand *hard* dollars, which they have at length received, their paper currency will be annihilated, so that they are now beginning on a new bank. As to the despondency of the people, believe it not; for the spirit of rebellion never breathed with more rancour than it does at this moment in America. Perhaps the great successes of our forces to the southward have convinced you by this time that the Carolinians and Virginians are still unconquered.

"The French and rebel army, united under Washington, consists of near twelve thousand men, exclusive of militia, who are now called upon to join with the greatest force they can collect, in the most sacred promise of plunder of this city. The French fleet from the West Indies is expected in a very short time with a reinforcement, and then we are to expect to be attacked here. As to the British army in these lines, small as it is, it is equal, beyond a doubt, to the annihilation of the monsieurs and rebels under the great general Washington, if they would risk a battle, which we have no reason to suppose they would not do, as they continue to insult us so unpunished. The conduct of this war has been, and continues to be, most shameful and unpardonable; and neither justice nor common sense is permitted to have the smallest weight in the counsels of our great men. Public faith, once deemed inviolable, is daily sacrificed, and not the smallest attention is paid to any thing but plunder. The expenditure of public money is notoriously committed to the most mean and dishonest of men. There is not a paltry clerk in one of our departments, who cannot in the space of a twelvemonth afford to keep his town and country house, carriage, &c. &c. and realise thousands. Facts must speak for themselves, and I hope they will be required. It is impossible, in short, to suppose that affairs can go as they should do, when merit is *discouraged*, infamy *rewarded*, and the name of an *honest* man a sufficient bar to his advancement. I am heartily sick of it all; I wish to return in peace and quietness to Old England.

"I say nothing of myself; but that I am, thank God, in good health, determined to *do my duty* in all situations to the best of my abilities; and let what happen, never to sign a convention with rebels.

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Lord Corn-
wallis be-
gins his
march.Expedition
of the light
troops.Defeat of
the gallant
and enter-
prising
Tarleton.

interjacent provinces, join Arnold, and in Virginia attack the marquis de la Fayette, an active partisan of the republicans; while sir Henry Clinton should in the north oppose general Washington, and count Rochambeau, commander of the French troops. Early in the year 1781, lord Cornwallis taking the field, advanced to the frontiers of Carolina. Tarleton having been ordered to scour the country to the left, pursued Morgan the American partisan; that officer retired to the Broad River, intending to cross it with his troops; but he found that from a sudden thaw the waters were so high as to render it impassible, unless with great danger: being so situated, and closely pressed by Tarleton, he resolved to hazard a battle. On the 18th of January, at eight in the morning, Tarleton came in sight of the enemy; they were drawn up on the edge of an open wood without defences, and though their numbers might have been somewhat superior to his own, the quality of his troops was so different as not to admit a doubt of success, which was still farther confirmed by his great strength of cavalry, so that every thing seemed to indicate a complete victory. His first line consisted of the seventh regiment, the foot and light infantry of his legion; the second of the first battalion of the seventy-first while troops of cavalry flanked each line. Morgan placed seven hundred militia in one line on the edge of the wood; the second consisted of regular troops, on which he had much dependence: these he disposed out of sight in the wood. The British troops soon broke the enemy's line, and concluding the victory to be gained, were pursuing the fugitives, when, on a sudden, the second line of the enemy, which opened to the right and left to entice the pursuers, poured in a close and deadly fire on both sides. The ground was in an instant covered with the killed and wounded; and those brave troops, who had been so long enured to conquest, by this severe and unexpected check, were thrown into irremediable disorder, and a total defeat was the immediate consequence: the loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, exceeded four hundred men. Tarleton used every effort that ingenuity could devise to rally his men, and repulse the American horse, but his abilities and courage could not recover the fallen

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1781.

Disadvantage to the British from this disaster.

fortune of the day. The loss of Tarleton's corps, so soon after the disaster at King's Mountain, was severely felt by lord Cornwallis, to whom, on such a service, and in such a country, light troops were of the highest importance. The American general, Green, who had been appointed to watch the motions of lord Cornwallis, was stationed with a considerable force in North Carolina. The British general proposed to cut off the enemy's communication with Virginia, and at the same time to strengthen South Carolina, so that it might not be endangered in his absence ; for this purpose he left a considerable body of forces at Charleston, under lord Rawdon. Lord Cornwallis first made an attempt to intercept Morgan, which the dexterity of that partisan eluded. The British army with much difficulty passed the Catawba, and being informed that general Green was posted at Guildford, lord Cornwallis marched towards that place. Green's force consisted of about six thousand men, while the British did not exceed two thousand ; therefore the American general determined to hazard a battle. The enemy were drawn up in the field, with a wood on the right, and other woods both in front and rear ; consequently the safest point of attack was on the left wing. At the same time the general was obliged to act with great caution, lest he should fall into an ambuscade from the woods, as Tarleton had done in a similar situation. Major general Leslie commanded the right wing, colonel Webster the left, Tarleton the cavalry, and his lordship himself the centre. A party of light infantry was stationed in the woods to act as occasion might require. The enemy's first line was soon broken ; the second made a very vigorous and gallant resistance, but were at length beaten back to the third line, which was stationed in the woods : there the battle became necessarily irregular ; the Americans being more accustomed to such a scene of combat, appeared for a short time likely to prevail ; but the grenadiers of the seventy-first regiment, having by a rapid movement passed over a deep ravine, charged with such impetuosity as to break the enemy's line : the confusion terminated in a total route. The loss on the side of the British amounted to five hundred men killed and wounded ; among those who died of wounds was colonel Webster,

Battle of Guildford.

Cornwallis successful, but with considerable loss.

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an officer very highly esteemed by the general^u and the whole army for courage, military skill, and ability. The loss of the Americans was considerably greater, but, when compared with their immediate resources, perhaps less in proportion than the loss of the conquerors. From Guildford the British army marched through a wild, inhospitable, and hostile country, and after encountering the severest hardships, arrived on the 7th of April at Wilmington in Virginia. Arnold, meanwhile, made an incursion into the northern parts of Virginia, and plundered the coast. Being soon reinforced by general Phillips, they made great havoc among the enemy, and were not without hopes of effecting a junction with lord Cornwallis.

Campaign
of lord
Rawdon.

GENERAL GREEN, after his defeat at Guildford, spent some time in collecting reinforcements, which having arrived, he marched to South Carolina, to cut off the communication between lords Cornwallis and Rawdon. The British force in South Carolina was so small, that their situation was extremely precarious; and their provisions were so much reduced, that their noble general was compelled to decline the proffered assistance of a body of loyalists, from absolute inability to afford them maintenance. Lord Rawdon was posted at Camden when Green arrived: his lordship learned that considerable reinforcements were expected by the American army; small as his own force was, our general formed a resolution at once bold and wise, to attack the enemy, numerous as they were, before they should be still more powerfully recruited. The Americans were encamped at two miles distance on the brow of a rocky steep,^x known by the name of Hobkirk Hill, flanked on the left by a deep swamp, and less fortified on that side, because there they apprehended no danger. Superior genius here acted on the same principle which in this history we have repeatedly seen successful, but especially in seeking and seizing the heights of Abraham^y. The commander attempted the most difficult approach, from

Battle of
Hobkirk
Hill.

^u Lord Cornwallis announced the death of this valiant officer to his father, the late Dr. Webster of Edinburgh, in a letter, which was published in the newspapers, and universally admired.

^x See Andrews, vol. iv.; Stedman, vol. ii.; and Ramsay.

^y Vol. i. c. i.

the well founded presumption that there defence would be the least vigilant. At ten in the morning of the 25th of April, the British troops marched to the enemy round this swamp undiscovered, and entered a wood bordering upon the enemy's left wing. Hence they rushed with such rapid impetuosity as to throw that division of the enemy into an instant confusion, which communicated to the main body. The Americans, however, far superior in number, were enabled to rally, and make a resolute stand : their artillery arriving at this moment, afforded them powerful support, and greatly annoyed the British force. The provincials extended their front to such a length, that lord Rawdon apprehended the intention of surrounding his troops. At this instant he conceived one of those happy designs which the emergencies of war call forth from combined heroism and ability ; he ordered his columns to form one line. Thin as this rank was, they charged the enemy with such fury, as proved totally irresistible, routed them, and obtained a complete victory. Whether we consider the design or execution, no action occurred during the war which displayed in a greater degree the united talents, valour, and ready invention, which constitute the soldier and the general : but little availed military excellence, when seconded by political weakness ; the reinforcements intended by ministers to join lord Rawdon, were not sent in proper time. By the late conflict his small band was reduced to eight hundred men, while the Americans, though defeated, were fast recruiting ; our valiant commander was thus arrested in the career of victory, and obliged to act on the defensive until fresh troops should arrive. At length, part of the expected reinforcements arrived at Charleston and the British general marched downwards to effect a junction. In his absence, Green invested the strong post of Ninety-six, and at the same time sent a detachment to besiege Augusta in Georgia. Apprehensive that lord Rawdon would speedily return, Green attempted to take the fort by assault, but the garrison made so vigorous a defence that the Americans were compelled to retire. The day after their retreat the British general arrived : he soon learned that Augusta was taken, and that the besiegers had rejoined the army of Green. The

The Americans besiege Ninety-six ;

but on the approach of lord Rawdon, abandon the attempt.

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force of the Americans was now so powerful, that great numbers of the provincials, who had professed obedience to Britain, threw off the mask, and avowed hostility. Finding every thing around him full of danger and enmity, the general perceived the necessity of abandoning Ninety-six, that he might converge his force for the defence of the lower province, and especially the capital. On his march he heard that a detachment of Americans was posted at Congaree creek, and immediately hastened to that spot. The enemy, by breaking down a bridge, endeavoured to impede the progress of the British; but Rawdon advanced with surprising quickness, a party of his troops waded through the river, drove the enemy from the bank, and cleared a passage for the rest of the army. Lord Rawdon made repeated attempts to bring Green to battle; but, taught by experience, the wary American skilfully and successfully avoided an encounter.

NOTWITHSTANDING the enterprise, skill, and genius, so conspicuously displayed by the brave young Rawdon, Green on the whole succeeded so far as to recover the greater part of Georgia, and the two Carolinas; and had also entirely cut off communication between the British commanders in South Carolina and Virginia. Lord Rawdon having soon after returned to England, the command in South Carolina devolved on colonel Stewart. Green having both reinforced his army in numbers, and improved them in discipline, resolved to attack the British forces. On the 8th of September, he put his design in execution, and attacked colonel Stewart at the Eutaws. Great numbers were killed on both sides, without any decisive event; the result, however, was on the whole favourable to the enemy, and the British thenceforward confined their operations to the vicinity of Charleston.

Cornwallis
enters Vir-
ginia,

reaches
Williams-
burg, and
establishes
himself at
Gloucester.

CORNWALLIS meanwhile entered Virginia, and made considerable progress near its southern coast. On the 25th of May he joined the body that had been commanded by general Phillips; and in the latter end of June, reached Williamsburgh. His lordship considered it of the highest consequence to command a post on a navigable river, as thus maritime assistance might cooperate with his land forces. He accordingly established himself at

Gloucester and at Yorktown, on the opposite banks of York river. The marquis de la Fayette, together with the American general Wayne, were stationed with a powerful body of troops to watch the motions of lord Cornwallis, and without hazarding an engagement, to restrain their operations. Having fortified this position, and taken a general view of the situation of affairs, he formed an opinion that a much greater force than that which he possessed would be necessary for reducing Virginia, and effecting the object of the campaign. He conceived that there could be no hopes of ultimate and decisive success, without very active cooperation on the part of the commander in chief.

SIR HENRY CLINTON appears not to have coincided in the judgment of the other general : instead of reinforcing the army in Virginia, he turned his attention solely to the defence of New York, against which he apprehended an attack from the combined armies. To confirm him in this apprehension, the genius of Washington devised a stratagem, which easily imposed on the very moderate sagacity with which the British commander in chief was gifted. General Clinton had intercepted many of the American letters in the course of his command, and published them in the New York papers. Washington now wrote letters to various officers, declaring that the only effectual mode of saving Virginia was by attacking New York in conjunction with the French troops ; which, he asserted, would be soon attempted ; for he was much alarmed at the success of a general, whom from experience he knew to be so fertile in resources, so vigorous in decision, and so prompt and expeditious in improving every advantage. These were (according to the writer's intention) also intercepted, and completely imposed on the British commander in chief. To continue the deception, the two commanders, accompanied by the principal officers of both armies, and attended by the engineers, reconnoitred the island of New York closely on both sides from the opposite shore ; and to render appearances the more serious, took plans of all their works under the fire of their batteries. The arrival of de Grasse was daily expected by the combined generals, and they resolved to

Dexterous
stratagem
of Wash-
ington,
which
overreach-
es Clinton.

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1781.

Washington joins
the forces
in Virginia.

proceed by forced marches to Virginia, not doubting that the mass of land and sea forces which would then be united, would overwhelm lord Cornwallis, when unassisted by the commander in chief. On the 19th of August they set out, and Clinton considered their departure as only a feint to cover their designs on New York: they proceeded to Virginia, and joined the army of la Fayette. De Grasse having arrived at the same time, blocked up York river with his ships, while his land forces effected a junction with the Americans. Intelligence had been despatched by sir George Rodney to admiral Graves, that the French fleet was destined for the Chesapeake, and that sir Samuel Hood was on his way to the same place, in expectation of meeting with admiral Graves and the New York squadron. The despatches having been unfortunately captured, did not reach the admiral. Sir Samuel Hood having arrived off the Chesapeake on the 25th of August, three days before, and being disappointed in his hopes of finding Graves there, proceeded to New York, which he reached on the 28th, and three days after the united squadrons sailed for the Chesapeake, and arrived the fifth of September, with nineteen ships of the line, when they discovered the French fleet at anchor there, amounting to twenty-four ships of the line. A partial engagement took place, in which several British ships were considerably damaged, but without any decisive event on either side. The hostile armaments kept five successive days in sight of each other, but stormy weather having much increased the damage of the British fleet, they returned to New York to refit. Meanwhile Barras, who had succeeded Terney in commanding the French naval force on the North American station, joined de Grasse; and thus the gallant army under the brave Cornwallis was inclosed and surrounded by an immense naval force, and an army of twenty-one thousand men, whilst his own corps did not exceed six thousand. Not conceiving it possible that sir Henry Clinton would be so completely outwitted, lord Cornwallis expected speedy succours, and made dispositions for a vigorous defence until they should arrive; meanwhile he found it necessary to contract his posts, and concentrate his defences; and the enemy immediately occupied those positions which the

A French
fleet blocks
up the
river.

Lord
Cornwallis
is sur-
rounded.

Expecting
succours
soon he re-
solves to
defend
himself to
the last.

British general had abandoned. The trenches were opened by both armies in the night between the 6th and 7th of October; the batteries were covered with little less than one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance, and their attacks were carried on with formidable energy. In a few days most of the British guns were silenced, and the defence rendered hopeless. An express, however, having arrived from New York, and informed the commander that he might rely on immediate succours, the general persevered in resistance. Two redoubts on the left of the British greatly impeded the progress of the siege. The second parallel of the enemy being now finished, they resolved to open their batteries on these works on the fourteenth of October. The British forces employed every efforts to defend the fortifications, but were overborne by the immense superiority of number. The noble commander saw that it would be impossible to withstand a general assault, for which the enemy was now prepared. Finding no succours likely to arrive, and himself surrounded on every side, he conceived a design of forcing his way through a part of the enemy, and making his escape, but found it would be impracticable. Thus hemmed in by a very superior army, through no rashness of his own, but in the skilful and vigorous execution of his part of a concerted plan, this brave leader had no alternative but the sacrifice of his gallant army without answering any purpose, or a surrender. On the latter step he at last resolved, and on the 19th of October yielded by an honourable capitulation.

Skilful and
gallant de-
fence.

Finding
himself un-
able to re-
sist, sur-
renders on
honour-
able terms.

AT last sir Henry Clinton set out from New York to attempt the relief of lord Cornwallis, two months after the departure of Washington and Rochambeau had left him at liberty to proceed to the assistance of the distressed army. He brought with him seven thousand land forces, with a fleet, which was now reinforced by admiral Digby, consisting of twenty-five ships of the line. Having arrived off the late scene of hostilities, they found that all was over, and that succours so tardily accorded were equivalent to desertion. The French fleet, though still superior to the British, having accomplished their purpose, cautiously avoided any conflict; and the British command-

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ers having no longer any inducement to remain upon that station, returned to New York.

SUCH was the fate of the gallant southern army and its valiant commander, from whose antecedent and recent successes sanguine hopes were entertained that the most valuable of the colonies would be recovered, and that the cause of Britain would ultimately prevail. In his laborious marches through the wild and intricate tracts, his lordship received the fullest and most experimental assurances that the people who were asserted by ministry or their adherents to be friendly, were generally hostile ; that every attempt to recover America through the Americans themselves, was chimerical, as much as every idea of reducing it by force. The plan he saw had been concerted upon false principles, and he himself had fatally learned that though he and his heroic band had done their utmost, there was almost an equal deficiency of support and cooperation for its execution. The surrender at Yorktown was the concluding scene of offensive war with America. All the profuse expenditure of British wealth, all the mighty efforts of British power, all the splendid achievements of British valour, directed and guided by British talents and skill, proved without effect ; the momentous exertions of a war so wasteful of blood and treasure were forever lost.

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Dissatisfaction again prevails in Britain—enhanced by the news from Virginia.—Out of parliament, a majority becomes inimical to the American war and to ministers.—Meeting of parliament—the king's speech—opposition inveigh with increased energy against ministers—dexterous defence by lord North—preliminary motions against ministers before the recess—manifest difference among opposition on American independence.—General plan of attack against administration now formed and matured—the various parts assigned, while Fox animates the whole.—Fox's proposed inquiry into the management of the navy—negatived by a small majority.—Conway's motion for an address to the king to conclude the American war—carried by a majority of nineteen.—Ministers still hold their places.—Lord John Cavendish's motion for the removal of ministers—the minister skilfully addresses himself to different sentiments and opinions—carries a motion for an adjournment—a coalition attempted in vain—the motion repeated by lord Surry.—Administration resigns.—Character of the North administration.—The duke of Richmond's strictures on the execution of colonel Haines—acknowledges he had been misinformed, and makes a satisfactory explanation.—Strictures on the promotion of Lord George Germaine to the peerage.—New administration.—The marquis of Rockingham first lord of the treasury—Mr. Fox and lord Shelburne secretaries of state.—Avowed plan of ministers.—Adjustment with Ireland.—Independence of the Irish parliament acknowledged.—Mr. Grattan's address.—Satisfaction of the Irish nation.—Supplies.—Parts of Mr. Burke's scheme adopted.—Conduct of Mr. William Pitt—connects himself with no party—reckons a chief advantage in our constitution the equipoise of the orders—projects a reform in parliament—proposes a committee to inquire into the state of representation—proposition

not considered as a party question.—The younger members the votaries of reform—the older are for adhering to the existing constitution.—Arguments for and against—the supporters of reform outvoted.—Overtures of Mr. Fox for peace with the Dutch.—Premature endeavours to pacify America.—Death of the marquis of Rockingham.—Lord Shelburne made prime minister—enraged at this appointment, Mr. Fox resigns.—Mr. William Pitt chancellor of the exchequer.—Mr. Fox gives a general account of the reasons of his resignation.—India affairs.—Reports of the committees represent the general system of government to be erroneous and hurtful, and state gross abuses to have been committed by the company's chief servants.—Warren Hastings implicated in the censure.—Exertions of Mr. Dundas.—Bill of pains and penalties against governor Rumbold and his coadjutors.—Session rises.

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Dissatisfaction again prevails in Britain ;

enhance by the news from Virginia.

A majority out of parliament becomes hostile to ministers.

DURING the recess of parliament 1781, dissatisfaction had begun again to prevail, from incidents and events already mentioned, and especially from repeated instances of alleged misconduct in the ministerial direction of the navy. That source of dissatisfaction being opened, speedily caused others to issue : the immense expenditure, the profuse loans, the enormous increase of taxes, the little avail of all our exertions, presented themselves to the view, and the public were very differently disposed towards ministers, on the approach of the second session of parliament, from what they had been at the beginning of the first. Both dejected and dissatisfied, their gloom and displeasure were dreadfully aggravated by the melancholy news from Virginia. Judging of ministry under the immediate impression of this calamitous event, they hastily imputed our misfortunes to a series of folly, obstinacy and misconduct. Many who had strenuously recommended perseverance in coercion, now reprobated that system which they had most loudly applauded : a majority out of parliament became inimical to the American war and the present ministers ; such was the disposition becoming prevalent, when parliament met on the 27th of November.

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Meeting of
parlia-
ment, and
the king's
speech.

His majesty's speech somewhat exceeding the usual length in copiousness of detail, imputed the continuance of the war to the restless ambition of his enemies. He should not discharge the trust committed to the sovereign of a free people, or requite the constant and zealous attachment of his subjects to his person, family, and government, if to his own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, he sacrificed their essential rights and permanent interests. Having mentioned the favourable affairs in the East Indies, he recommended farther inquiries into the condition of the dominions and revenues of that country. His majesty stated to the house, without palliation or diminution, the unfortunate event of the campaign in Virginia, but adduced it as a ground for a firm confidence in parliament, and more vigorous, animated, and united exertions. The consequent address excited a very interesting debate, in which opposition sketched the principal topics of the charges which they adduced against ministers in the course of the session, and of the counsels which they proposed to be substituted. Their arguments were directed to prove the original folly of the American war; the madness of perseverance in so hopeless a contest; the incapacity, negligence, and mismanagement of the first lord of the admiralty; the ignorance, weakness, and incompetence of administration in their various departments, as well as general system; and the necessity of changing both men and measures. Lord North defended himself and his colleagues, both as to particular counsels and the series of policy, with a dexterity and ingenuity that, if it did not convince impartial readers or hearers, at least impressed them with a high opinion of the speaker's ability.

Opposition
inveigh
with in-
creased
energy
against
ministers.

Dexterous
defence of
lord North

On the 4th of December, Mr. Burke proposed an inquiry into the conduct of the captors of St. Eustatius; a confiscation of effects, he alleged, there took place contrary to national justice and to national policy. To prove his first head, he entered into a very learned and able discussion of the extent of powers acquired by conquerors over an enemy surrendering at discretion; and for this purpose quoted the authority of the most celebrated writers on the law of nations, traced the history of these laws, and their

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Preliminary motions
against
ministers,
before the
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actual state, as elucidated by the concurrent practice of all civilized societies. The feelings of mankind had even exceeded the theories of jurisprudence in mitigating the calamities of war: hence he inferred the necessity, in the present improved state of that code, of interpreting the maxims of law, even in the most mild and favourable sense. He therefore contended, that from the moment of submission, the vanquished parties were entitled to the security of subjects. Having laid down this proposition, he proceeded to a detail of the alleged enormities which he contended to be contrary to every dictate of justice and humanity, and offered to prove his allegations by testimony. Such cruelty and depredation, by exciting the hatred and enmity of neutral states, were no less impolitic than unjust. Admiral Rodney, without controverting Mr. Burke's general principle, totally denied his statement of the case; the Dutch were at war with us, therefore it was perfectly fair, and consistent with the law of nations, that their property captured without a capitulation should be confiscated: he had seized the whole, not for himself and the other captors, but for the crown: he could have no mercenary views, as he did not till long after receive intelligence of the king's intention to bestow the booty on the fleet and army. He knew of no outrage, and never had heard that any was committed by the conquerors. The charge being unsupported by facts and documents, Mr. Burke's motion was negatived. On the 12th of December, the day appointed for considering the army supplies, a motion was brought forward by sir James Lowther concerning the American war, apparently intended to sound the dispositions of the house, and preparatory to more pointed propositions. It was proposed to declare, that the war in North America had been hitherto ineffectual to the purposes for which it was undertaken; and that perseverance in it would be unavailing, and also injurious to the country, by weakening her power to resist her ancient and confederated enemies. On this subject, so often discussed in such a variety of forms, there could be little novelty of argument. But opposition, in the division, ascertained the point which they were most anxious to establish: the minority, amounting to one hundred and seventy-nine to two hundred and

twenty, showed that ministers were losing ground. In the course of the discussions which American affairs underwent before the recess, the difference between lord Shelburne's connexions and the Rockingham party, concerning the independence, became more manifest than on any former occasion. Great contests also prevailed in the cabinet, respecting the plan of policy to be adopted in the present emergency. Some of the ministers proposed the total evacuation of America, and the direction of our whole force against the house of Bourbon; but the majority still cast a longing lingering look after the object which they had pursued for so many years. The most sanguine saw now, that all hopes of reducing the whole of the colonies were for ever vanished, but they still fondly fancied that they might preserve a part; and it was therefore determined, that a considerable force should be left at New York.

DURING the recess, the opponents of ministry were employed in forming and maturing a plan of general attack against administration. The chief conduct was intrusted to Mr. Fox; and the various parts assigned to other senators, were to be directed and supported by this illustrious leader, so admirably fitted for the warfare which he now undertook. Indeed, though it would be difficult to determine in what mode such transcendent powers COULD be most effectually exerted; it is certain, as an historical fact, that the force and splendour of Mr. Fox's genius *have been* most frequently displayed, not in legislative invention or plans of executory policy, but in reprehensive eloquence; not in devising systems and measures for the wise and beneficial government of the country; but in contending that others have planned and acted unwisely and injuriously. On the 23d of January, the day after the Christmas adjournment expired, Mr. Fox moved an inquiry into the causes of the want of success of his majesty's naval forces during the war, and more particularly in the year 1781. For this purpose, he proposed a committee; which being agreed to by ministers, he, a fortnight after, on the 7th of February, discussed the subject. He traced the naval history from the beginning of the war, and exhibited a summary of the alleged miscarriages of the successive years. In surveying the events of 1780, he, with pecu-

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Difference
of opinion
among op-
position on
American
independ-
ence.

Plan of
general at-
tack
against ad-
ministra-
tion.

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liar energy, exposed the infatuation which sent captain Moutray, with the East and West India fleets, so near the enemy's coasts. Having reached 1781, he stated five distinct charges of misconduct in the naval department: 1st, De Grasse was suffered to depart for the West Indies, without any effort to intercept his fleet. He had sailed from Brest on the 22d of March, with twenty-five ships of the line; Darby was at sea on the 13th, but instead of being suffered to pursue the enemy, he had been sent out of the way to Ireland. The second charge was, the loss of the St. Eustatius convoy, which had been captured on its way home; this might have been easily saved by sending a squadron at the time they were expected. The third was a letter sent by the mayor of Bristol from the admiralty, in answer to one from that gentleman, requesting information concerning the combined fleets; the admiralty had misinformed and misled the Bristol merchants, by intimating that the hostile armament was not in the channel, when they knew that it was there, and had thereby endangered the trading ships of that city. The fourth charge was on the force sent to cope with the Dutch; and the fifth, the inadequate fleet sent out with admiral Kempenfeldt. The general defence adduced by lord Mulgrave, in favour of earl Sandwich, was, that he had acted according to information, moral probability, and the existing circumstances. Mr. Fox made a motion, founded on his five charges, that it is the opinion of this committee, that there has been gross mismanagement in the administration of the naval affairs of Great Britain during the course of the year 1781. The question being called for, Mr. Fox's motion was negatived by a majority of only two hundred and five to one hundred eighty-three. Encouraged by the progressive declension of ministerial majorities, on the 22d of February, opposition, in a motion made by general Conway, proposed to address the king, to put an end to the American war. After both sides had repeated arguments so often employed, the country gentlemen now leaving ministers, Conway's motion was negatived by a majority of only one, being one hundred and ninety-four to one hundred and ninety-three; and opposition cherished hopes of speedy success. Fully confident

Is negatived by a small majority.

Conway's motion for an address to the king to put an end to the American war carried.

of victory, Conway, on the 27th of February, proposed the same motion under a different form. The usual arguments being repeated, opposition carried their motion by a majority of two hundred and thirty-four to two hundred and fifteen; and thus, after a contest of eight years, Mr. Fox and his party succeeded in their attempt to procure a vote from the house, for requesting the king to conclude the American war.

* THE following motion was accordingly carried :---

“ Resolved, February 27th, in the house of commons,
“ That an humble address be presented to his majesty,
“ most humbly to represent to his majesty, that the further
“ prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North
“ America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted co-
“ lonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weak-
“ ening the efforts of this country against her European
“ enemies; tends, under the present circumstances, danger-
“ ously to increase the mutual enmity, so fatal to the inter-
“ ests both of Great Britain and America; and by preventing
“ an happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the
“ earnest desire, graciously expressed by his majesty, to
“ restore the blessings of public tranquillity.” To this
address his majesty returned the following answer: “ Gen-
“ tlemen of the house of commons, There are no objects
“ nearer to my heart, than the ease, happiness, and pros-
“ perity of my people. You may be assured, that, in pur-
“ suance to your advice, I shall take such measures as
“ shall appear to me to be most conducive to the restoration
“ of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted co-
“ lonies, so essential to the prosperity of both; and that
“ my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner
“ against our European enemies, till such peace can be
“ obtained as shall consist with the interests and permanent
“ welfare of my kingdom.”

MINISTERS had often declared that they would hold their places no longer than a parliamentary majority should sanction their system and measures; it was therefore expected that a resignation would immediately ensue. Lord North and his colleagues, however, continued to hold their places, because they said it did not appear, by any vote or resolution, that parliament had withdrawn its confidence from

Ministers
still hold
their pla-
ces.

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Lord John
Cave-
dish's mo-
tion for the
removal of
ministers.

The min-
ister skil-
fully ad-
dresses
himself to
different
sentiments
and opin-
ions.

the present administration : confiding in its increasing strength, the opposite party resolved to bring this question to immediate issue. Accordingly, lord John Cavendish, on the 8th of March, proposed resolutions to the following effect : that, from 1775, the nation had expended upwards of one hundred millions in a fruitless war : during which we had lost thirteen colonies, many of our valuable West India and other islands ; that the rest were in imminent danger ; that we were now engaged in an expensive war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, without a single ally ; that the chief cause of these accumulated misfortunes was the united incapacity and misconduct of administration. The three first of these resolutions could not but be admitted as matters of fact : respecting the fourth, which was an inference from the others, Mr. Fox contended, that a long uniform series of calamity and disgrace was a sufficient proof of misconduct : and farther, that weakness and folly distinctly marked each separate measure of every minister, as they collectively pervaded the whole system of administration. Lord North argued, that it was unfair from misfortune to infer misconduct ; but that even if misconduct existed, it might be in the execution, instead of the plans. The minister, however, was aware, that a direct and pointed answer to the charges could be of little avail ; therefore, with his usual dexterous ingenuity, he shifted his ground. To draw the attention of the house from the conduct of ministers, the question at issue, he called on them to consider, if the present counsellors should be removed, who, probably, would be their successors. His lordship well knew that there were independent members in the house, who, though they disapproved lately of administration, were by no means desirous of being governed by a whig combination. By far the greater number of opposition members either originally were, or had become partisans of that connexion. He was aware, that not only the Rockingham system of ruling the nation by a confederacy, but also various opinions and measures were by no means consonant to the sentiments of all who now voted on their side. Was the house (he said) prepared to new model the constitution, to alter the duration of parliaments, and the rights of elec-

tions? Would it consent to a violation of the national faith with the crown, by adopting a celebrated bill of reform in the civil list expenditure? Would it vote the independence of America? on which subject he understood there was as great difference between the two branches of opposition, as between opposition and ministers. Mr. Dundas eminently distinguished himself, and with his usual strength of explicit and direct argument urged the house, before they voted for removing the present ministers and throwing the government into the hands of their opponents, to have it thoroughly ascertained and accurately defined, what the objects of these opponents were; what system they proposed to adopt, and what measures they intended to pursue. These considerations had so much influence, that the supporters of ministers prevailed, and the resolution was negatived by a majority of ten, and a motion was carried for adjourning the house until the 15th. Many moderate and independent members wished for a coalition, which should prevent the country from being entirely governed by any party. Ministers were well inclined to that expedient, and during the adjournment made several attempts to give it effect, but to no purpose. On the 15th, sir John Rous made a motion similar to that of the 8th; no less than four hundred and eighty members were present, when ministers still carried the negative by a majority of nine. The opposite party immediately announced, that the resolutions would be again proposed; accordingly, on the 20th of March, a very crowded house attended, and lord Surry rose to make the promised motion. Before he had begun to speak, lord North rose to communicate to the house information which (he said) would supersede the necessity of the present motion, and require an adjournment. Some disorder arose from what was conceived interruption to lord Surry; but being quieted, lord North informed the house, that there was *no administration*, and moved for an adjournment until new arrangements should be formed. He then took his leave of the commons as minister, by thanking them for their honourable support during so long a course of years, and in so many trying situations. He expressed his grateful sense of their flattering partiality towards him at all times, and

He carries a motion for an adjournment. A coalition is attempted in vain;

the motion is repeated by lord Surry.

Administration resigns.

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their forbearance on many occasions. A successor of greater abilities, of better judgment, and more qualified for his situation, (he said,) was easy to be found; a successor more zealously attached to the interests of his country, more anxious to promote them, more loyal to his sovereign, and more desirous of preserving the constitution whole and entire, he might be allowed to say, could not so easily be found. He concluded his speech with declaring, he did not mean to shrink from trial, but should always be prepared to meet inquiry, nay, even demanded from his adversaries the strictest scrutiny.

Character
of the
North ad-
ministra-
tion.

THUS ended the administration of lord North, a period, of which the greater part teemed with calamitous events, beyond any of the same duration to be found in the annals of British history. A war, with so great, productive, and important part of our own community, lost thirteen flourishing and powerful colonies, the promoters of private and public wealth, and the nourishers of national force. Hostilities, whencesoever they arose, not only subtracted from us such constituents of strength, but added them to our inveterate enemies. Year after year our blood and treasure were expended to no purpose; myriads of men were killed, hundreds of millions were lavished without obtaining any valuable object. Temporary gleams of partial success were followed by the permanent gloom of general disaster. Were we to judge from result solely, and to draw a conclusion from the broad principle, that an uniform series of miscarriages in the natural course of human affairs, implies a great portion of misconduct, our estimate of this administration might be easily formed; but general rules, applied to the appreciation of conduct, often require to be nicely modified according to the actual circumstances. I trust it has appeared to the impartial reader, that the chief minister possessed very considerable talents and fair intentions, though mingled with defects, and acting in such emergencies as precluded beneficial exertion and consequences. But however erroneous and hurtful the series of measures was during this administration, far is the blame from being confined to ministers. It indeed belongs chiefly to parliament, which by its approbation sanctioned their acts, and to the people themselves of whom the

greater part was eager for commencing and continuing the war. When the nation censures his burdensome and disastrous war, productive of such an enormous load of taxes, *they must remember that it ORIGINATED IN THEMSELVES.*

WHILE the house of commons was engaged in the momentous discussions, which I have been narrating, matters of a more personal nature were debated in the house of lords. The duke of Richmond moved for an inquiry into the case of colonel Haines, executed at Charleston, under the following circumstances. Haines an American officer, having been taken prisoner at Charleston, had demanded his parole, but had been refused, unless he would take the oaths of allegiance. With this alternative he readily complied, and thus bound himself to perform the duties of a British subject. On the faith of his sworn fealty, he was permitted to go and reside on his estate in the interior country at some distance from Charleston; he there raised two hundred men, attacked the innocent inhabitants who would not join his banditti, murdered some, fired the houses of others, and threatened the lives of many who fled; by taking this ungenerous inhuman advantage of the lenity which he experienced he added perjury to a breach of trust and aggravated the forfeiture of his word by the blackest treachery. By the laws of war as established in the practice of nations, a person taken in arms against the state under which he had accepted his parole was liable to be hanged instantly without any farther proof than what should identify his person. Haines was taken in arms; and, his identity being admitted, he was by lord Rawdon and a board of officers sentenced to be hanged, and accordingly suffered the punishment due to such treachery. General Green had represented this judgment as a transgression of the laws of nations, and issued a manifesto to that effect, threatening to retaliate on British prisoners; but adduced neither argument nor authority to prove his positions. The duke of Richmond having received some partial account of these circumstances, described the procedure of lord Rawdon and the other officers to have been impolitic, illegal, and barbarous. Lord Stormont and the chancellor stated the

The duke of Richmond's strictures on the execution of colonel Haines:

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Strictures
on lord
George
Ger-
maine's
promotion
to the
peerage.

New ad-
ministra-
tion : the
marquis of
Rocking-
ham first
lord of the
treasury,
Mr Fox
and lord
Shelburne
secretaries
of state.

actual case, and vindicated the noblemen and gentlemen in question from so heavy a charge. His grace, on reconsidering the subject, was induced to make a satisfactory explanation to the young lord whose name had been called in question, and to declare to the house the high opinion of that brave soldier's humanity² and just intentions, though he still doubted whether the proceeding was strictly legal. It being understood in the house that a peerage was about to be conferred on lord George Germaine, as a mark of royal approbation for his ministerial conduct, opposition, not choosing directly to interfere with the king's right of bestowing that dignity, objected to it on a different ground, that it was inconsistent with the honour of that house, for a person who had received such a sentence from a court martial, farther confirmed by his sovereign, to be raised to the peerage. A motion to that effect being made was immediately negatived, as a violent encroachment on the rights of the crown. Some days after, his lordship having now taken his seat in the upper house, the motion was again introduced : viscount Sackville vindicated his own character individually as being by the long confidence of his sovereign purified from the stigma of a sentence of twenty-two years before, under circumstances of very questionable impartiality and equity ; and farther asserted the constitutional right of the crown, to bestow the peerage according to its judgment and discretion.

DURING the adjournment of the house, a new administration was formed : the marquis of Rockingham was appointed first lord of the treasury ; the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox secretaries of state ; lord Camden president of the council ; the duke of Grafton privy seal ; lord John Cavendish chancellor of the exchequer ; admiral Keppel, who was also created a viscount, first commissioner of the admiralty ; general Conway commander in chief of the forces ; the duke of Richmond, master general of the ordnance ; lord Thurlow was continued in his office of lord high chancellor, Mr. Dunning was created baron Ashburton, and made chancellor of the dutchy of Lancaster. The

² Lord Newdon was inclined to save Haines, had such an extension of mercy been consistent with strict justice, and the example to be exhibited to treacherous violators of their parole.

following were understood to be the public measures which ministers undertook to support : peace with the Americans and the acknowledgement of their independence was not to be a bar to the attainment of that object ; they were to effect a substantial reform in several branches of the civil list expenditure, on the plan proposed by Mr. Burke, the diminution of the influence of the crown ; under which article the bills for excluding contractors from seats in parliament, and disqualifying the revenue officers from voting in the election of members, were included. The house adjourned for several days at Easter, and did not meet after the formation of the new ministry, to execute any business until April. On the 8th, Mr. Eden, who had been secretary to lord Carlisle late lord lieutenant, exhibited a view of the political history of Ireland, stated means which were then forming for rendering the country totally independent of the British legislature, and concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the act of the 6th of George I. as asserted a right in the king and parliament of Great Britain to make laws to bind the kingdom of Ireland. Mr. Fox informed the house that Irish affairs had already undergone the discussion of several privy councils, and that the next day, he would be prepared to propose a preliminary measure on the subject ; Eden therefore withdrew his motion. The next day messages were delivered to the two houses, recommending such an adjustment as would give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms. The duke of Portland, the lord lieutenant, sent a similar message to both the houses of the Irish parliament, in consequence of which an address was moved by the celebrated Mr. Grattan, leader of the popular party. This representation fully and explicitly asserted the independent rights of the kingdom of Ireland, and proceeded to state the causes of those jealousies and discontents which had arisen in that country ; the act of the 6th of George I. the power of suppressing or altering bills in the privy council, and the perpetual mutiny bill. It concluded with expressing the most sanguine expectations from his majesty's virtuous choice of a chief governor, and their great confidence in the wise, auspicious, and constitutional counsels which they had the satisfaction to see his majesty

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Avowed
plan of
ministers.

Adjust-
ment with
Ireland.

Mr. Grat-
tan's ad-
dress.

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Independence of
the Irish
parliament
ascertain-
ed.Part of
Mr.
Burke's
scheme of
reform is
adopted.Conduct of
Mr. Wil-
liam Pitt;
he connects
himself
with no
party.

had adopted. On the seventeenth of May, the repeal of the act complained of was moved in the house, and passed without opposition; and the parliament of Ireland was rendered independent on the parliament of Great Britain. In return for the liberal procedure of the British government in relinquishing its claims without stipulation or condition whatever, the parliament of Ireland immediately voted 100,000*l.* for the purpose of raising 20,000 Irish seamen for the service of his majesty's navy.^a The new ministers proceeded to their plans of reform and economy; bills were passed for disqualifying revenue officers from voting in the election of members of parliament, and for rendering contractors incapable of sitting in the house of commons. On the 15th of April, a message was brought from the king, recommending the adoption of a plan for the curtailment of expenses through all the branches of public expenditure. Mr. Burke, now paymaster-general of the forces, revived his plan of reform, and proposed as part of it, a bill to enable his majesty to pay off the debt on his civil list, to prevent the like in future, and to carry into a law the retrenchments which his majesty had graciously proposed to make in his household. Without entering into the detail of the reduction which was effected by this bill when passed into a law, it may be sufficient to state in general, that its annual saving amounted to 72,368*l.* He followed the bill by another, for the regulation of his own office: the principal object of the latter act, was to prevent the possibility of any balance accumulating in the hands of the paymaster-general. On the 3d of May, Mr. Wilkes having made his annual motion for expunging the famous resolution of 1769, respecting the Middlesex election, at last succeeded by a majority of 115 to 47.

MR. WILLIAM PITT had voted against lord North's system and measures, but never formed any connexion with the Rockingham confederacy, and accepted no place under the new administration. Young as this gentleman was, he had studied moral and political philo-

^a The sum of 500,000*l.* was also voted for purchasing an estate, and erecting a mansion therein, to be settled on Henry Grattan, Esq. and the heirs of his body, as a testimony of their gratitude for the unequalled benefits conferred by him on that kingdom.

sophy more thoroughly, knew them more deeply, radically, and extensively, than most of the ablest men of the time, though matured by experience. He had accurately investigated the history, detail, and spirit of the British constitution, comprehended its objects, principles, and actual state: he conceived it to be the highest effort of human wisdom, and its support essential to the prosperity and happiness of the nation. He saw that, notwithstanding the excellence of our polity, various corruptions had arisen, and various evils had issued from legislature, very pernicious to the country. Considering one of the chief advantages of our system to be the equipoise of the component estates, he imputed recent measures and miscarriages to a derangement in the proper balance. Like other young men of lofty genius, grand conceptions, habituated to scientific processes, and accustomed to generalization, but not yet matured in the practice of affairs, in devising a corrective he formed theories which subsequent experience could not entirely confirm. There was in many parts of the kingdom a disposition of election franchises totally disproportionate both to numbers and to property; and hence there appeared to be a defect in the representation of the commons of England. This inequality was founded neither on alleged merits or property on the part of the electors. In a considerable number of boroughs, there was not only a paucity of voters, but the few that enjoyed franchises were in such a state as to render them in a great measure dependent on individuals. As there were evidently very great abuses in the administration of affairs, as legislature appeared in many instances to have sanctioned measures very detrimental to the country, it was natural to impute the conduct of part of the majorities to the corrupt influence of the crown, and the efficacy of ministerial seduction. To remove the alleged source of evil, many patriotic men projected a reform in parliament. Lord Chatham had been favourable to an alteration in this department of the constitution: his son formed the same general opinion. To the contemplation of philosophical theory it appeared an anomaly in the British polity, that seven thousand individuals should return three-eighths of the national representatives, whilst seven hundred thousand

He projects
a reform in
parliament,

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and pro-
poses an in-
quiry into
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sentation.Arguments
for and
against.

not inferior in property, merit, or any other constituent of superiority, had not a single vote.^b He therefore resolved to propose some plan for meliorating the representation. Aware, however, of the delicate ground on which he trod, he proceeded very cautiously; intending to investigate facts before he drew a conclusion or constructed schemes, he confined himself to a motion that a committee should be appointed to inquire into the state of the representation in parliament, and to report their sentiments to the house. This subject was not then debated as a party question, but as a proposition of general policy. Of men of talents, the younger, such as Messrs. Fox, Pitt, and Sheridan, were chiefly in favour of the inquiry: the older and more experienced, such as Mr. Burke, lord North, and Mr. Dundas, opposed the agitation of topics which they conceived might excite a ferment in the country. They argued that representation, as it stood, though in theory apparently irregular, assembled in parliament as much collective virtue, wisdom, and property, as could be brought together by any mode that might be adopted; that parliament by its present constitution, was as much disposed, qualified, and empowered to answer the ends of legislature, as it could be rendered by any increase or new modification of representatives and electoral franchises. Besides, sentiments had begun to be entertained and inculcated in certain classes respecting government, very different from those of the supporters of the present inquiry in parliament. Doctrines tending to diminish the veneration of Britain for our constitutional establishments, and to recommend the visionary theories of democratical republicanism, were published by men of considerable name and authority, and rapidly spread among their peculiar adherents. Though these sciolists were understood to have no connexion with

^b It is probable the great manufacturers of Manchester may be more interested in the prosperity of their country than a journeyman carpenter at Shoreham; that Dr. Samuel Johnson, or Mr. David Hume, might be more competent judges of a lawgiver than a journeyman ropemaker of the same noted repository of electors. The capitalists and philosophers had no vote, the labouring mechanics have a vote. Still, however, the property of the man of wealth is protected, and benefits both himself and his country: the talents of the men of genius were remunerated, and produced honour and advantage to their country as much as if they had all possessed a privilege of polling for a member of parliament.

the ablest and most eminent advocates of parliamentary reform, yet it was easily foreseen that they might arrive at great influence over the weaker votaries of political change, in whose undistinguishing minds their wild and extravagant theories might pass for the soundest philosophy, or the most beneficial lessons of practical wisdom. From these considerations, the most experienced of our able senators opposed the motion, which was negatived by a majority of one hundred and sixty-one to one hundred and forty-one. On the 18th of October, lord John Cavendish moved ten resolutions, by which the house should declare the necessity of proceeding early the next session with those regulations for the reform of the civil list, which it was thought too late to complete in the present. While such measures were proceeding in the senate, Mr. Fox commenced the exertion of his talents as a minister, by offering to Holland the renewal of that peace and amity which had so long subsisted between the respective powers, upon the terms of the treaty of 1674. In order to effect so desirable an object, he proposed hostilities should be immediately suspended: this offer was made through the Russian minister, but was very coldly received by the Dutch, who were not disposed to put an end to the war without their allies. He also made overtures for peace with the Americans: soon after he was appointed minister, he proposed to recognise the independence of the United States of America unconditionally, and not to reserve it as a term of peace. The proposal being agreed to in council, lord Shelburne officially wrote to the commander in chief to communicate this resolution to congress, as well as the determination of parliament to put an end to the American war; but that body would not agree to a separate peace. Before, however, the resolutions of the provincials on this subject could be reported to the British government, an event happened, the consequence of which induced Mr. Fox and his connexions to resign their places in administration. On the 1st of July died Charles marquis of Rockingham, first lord of the treasury; a man of plain and sound understanding, unquestioned probity, great benevolence, the most liberal munificence, and patriotic intentions. He was a lover of the British constitution, but educated

The supporters of reform are outvoted.

Overtures of Mr. Fox for peace with the Dutch, premature.

He endeavours to pacify America.

Death of the marquis of Rockingham.

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Lord Shelburne is made prime minister. Mr. Fox and his friends resign.

Mr. William Pitt is appointed chancellor of the exchequer.

Mr. Fox gives a general account of the reasons of his resignation.

India affairs and reports of the committees.

in the prejudices as well as principles of the whig party, he early imbibed and always retained an opinion, that it was necessary for the wellbeing of this country, for its government to be in the hands of a whig connexion. His adherents and supporters either adopted or professed to adopt this opinion; the ablest of these, Messrs. Burke and Fox, extraordinary as their talents were, appeared to rest their consequence less on their individual powers than on the rank which they held in the whig confederacy. On the death of the marquis of Rockingham, the duke of Portland was esteemed by his party the head of the whigs, and on that account the properest person to be first lord of the treasury. His majesty, however, using his prerogative of appointing his own servants, made choice of lord Shelburne. Lord John Cavendish and Mr. Fox soon afterwards resigned their offices, and were followed by the duke of Portland as lord lieutenant, Mr. Montague from the board of treasury, lord Duncannon and Mr. J. Townshend from the admiralty, Mr. Burke and Mr. Lee the solicitor general. Mr. William Pitt was made chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. T. Townshend and lord Grantham secretaries of state, Mr. Pepper Arden succeeded Mr. Lee, the lord advocate of Scotland filled the place of Mr. Barré, who was removed to the pay-office, and earl Temple was appointed to the lieutenancy of Ireland. Parliament having met the 9th of July, for the first time after this change, Mr. Fox undertook to explain the motives of his late resignation. "It had (he said) been understood by lord Rockingham's friends, that lord Shelburne had, on coming into office, acceded to their measures; that he had sacrificed his own opinion respecting the independency of America to the sentiments of his colleagues; but Mr. Fox found totally different principles were adopted, which he would not then detail, and thought it his duty to resign. He pledged himself, when circumstances would admit of a particular statement of his reasons, to prove that they were well founded."

THE two committees continued to bestow unremitting attention on East India affairs. Their reports were voluminous beyond example, and universally allowed to be drawn up with the greatest ability and discrimination.

The first object of inquiry and original cause of its being set on foot, was the conduct of judges : this being investigated, produced a report; of which the following are the heads ; it appeared that the English judges had taken cognisance of causes between native land holders, not in the service of the company, consequently, by the act of parliament, not within the jurisdiction of the English courts ; and had proceeded in several cases to inflict severe penalties on those who refused to acknowledge their authority. The most important instances alleged of extrajudicial assumption, were in civil actions, the Patna and the Cossijurah causes, in the first, two native magistrates, men of rank and respectability, were imprisoned, and their effects confiscated by an English sheriff, for their official conduct in a case which was not under the jurisdiction of the English tribunal. In the second, the rajah of Cossijurah having resisted the jurisdiction of the court, the sheriff had despatched an armed force to compel obedience ; but the governor general and council ordered a more numerous body to march speedily, and prevented what they conceived to be illegal acts. The most noted instance of interference in extrajudicial causes of criminal process, was the trial and execution of Nundcomar for forgery. Nundcomar, a bramin of the highest cast, was tried, condemned, and hanged on a statute of George II. against forgery, strictly confined, and appropriated to England and its paper currency. Neither the person accused, nor the person whose name was forged were subject to the British jurisdiction : by the laws of India, forgery is not punishable capitally ; thus a man was put to death by a court to which he was not amenable, for a crime not capital by the laws to which he was amenable. On these reports several resolutions were brought forward by general Smith, some of which were to censure Mr. Sullivan for neglect of duty in delaying to transmit the act of regulation to the servants of the company, and instructions to release the unjustly imprisoned magistrates of Patna ; and also for restraining one of the secretaries of the India company, by an oath, from giving information to the committee. The other motions related to the conduct of sir Elijah Impey. On these resolutions, the house addressed his majesty to recal sir Elijah Impey.

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The committee, in discussing the conduct of judicature, found some proceedings in which Mr. Hastings appeared to have exceeded the authority vested in the governor general by the act of parliament. The chairman, therefore, proposed that a new act should be introduced to ascertain the power of the governor general and council of Bengal.

The reports represent the system of government to be erroneous and hurtful.

Exertions of Mr. Dundas.

Mr. Hastings implicated.

Bills of pains and penalties against governor Rumbold.

Supplies.

THE secret committee took a much wider range of inquiry than the select committee, and extended its investigations to the proceedings of deliberative and executive offices, as well as judicative; and also included the presidency of Madras with Calcutta. The vigorous genius and indefatigable industry of Mr. Dundas produced one hundred and eleven resolutions, which he arranged into three classes, each of which consisted of three distinct heads; the two first of public and general nature, the third of personal culpability. The first class regarded the general system of our government in India, and included a severe censure on the conduct of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornsby, with a declaration, that it was the duty of the directors to recal these officers of the company from employments in which they had been guilty of flagrant malversation. The second and third classes of resolutions respected the affairs of the Carnatic, and contained very severe animadversions on the general administration of the presidency, with specific charges of great moment against sir Thomas Rumbold, late governor of Madras, Mr. Whitehill and Mr. Perrin, members of the council. Bills of pains and penalties were passed against these gentlemen, and the usual regulations annexed, to prevent themselves from leaving the kingdom, or their effects from being confiscated.

THE supplies of the year were one hundred thousand seamen, with nearly the same number of land forces as in the former year. The loan this year was 13,510,000l.: the terms were near six per cent. but as stocks was so low as fifty-four, and money could not be borrowed at a much cheaper rate, the conditions underwent little animadversion; the new taxes were on insurances, bills of exchange, inland water carriage and coasting navigation, five per

cent. additional duty on all excise and customs on brandies, about ten per cent. on the necessary article of small beer, and twenty per cent. on salt and tobacco : imposts so much affecting the lower classes, were the subjects of loud complaint. On the 11th of July his majesty prorogued parliament, and in his speech steered very clear of every allusion to political changes.

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Session
rises.

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West Indies.—French recover St. Eustatius to the Dutch.—Invest St. Christophers—bold attempt of sir Samuel Hood to relieve the Island—skilful operations of that admiral—but for want of military force, ineffectual.—St. Christophers surrenders, and also Nevis and Montserrat.—Apprehensions for Jamaica.—Sir George Rodney arriving from Britain with a reinforcement, resumes the command.—Objects of the admiral.—De Grasse sails from Martinico.—Rodney pursues the enemy, and overtakes them off Guadaloupe.—Battle of the 12th of April—gallant efforts of the French—at length Rodney breaks the line—gains a decisive victory—takes or destroys a great part of the fleet.—Principle of naval warfare illustrated by this victory—important advantages.—Summary of Rodney's exploits against our three naval enemies—created a peer.—North America.—Sir Henry Clinton resigns the command—succeeded by Carleton.—No active hostilities.—East Indies.—Pecuniary deficiencies.—Schemes of Mr. Hastings to procure resources for carrying on the war.—The zemindars—tenure of their possessions.—Cheyt Sing—rajah of Benares.—Stipulated subsidy.—Mr. Hastings's view of Cheyt Sing's relation to the company.—Applies for an extraordinary subsidy to answer the company's emergency—granted repeatedly with reluctance.—Hastings repeats his demand.—Proceeds to Benares to enforce compliance.—Conduct of Cheyt Sing and his people—he flies from Benares.—Alleged disaffection and machinations of the Begums.—At the instance of Mr. Hastings their treasures confiscated.—Hastings detaches the Mahratta prince from the confederacy of native powers.—Suffrein expects to crush the British naval force in India—disappointed.—Various conflicts between him and sir Edward Hughes—though not decisive, are favourable to Britain.—Campaign of sir Eyre Coote against Hyder Ally.—Colonel

Braithwait's corps surprised and overpowered by Tippoo Saib.—Signal victory of sir Eyre Coote at Red-hill—Hyder Ally completely discomfited—worn out by fatigue, sir Eyre Coote resigns the command.—Hastings succeeds in putting an end to the Indian confederacy.—Operations of sir Edward Hughes.—Expedition against Mysore from the Malabar coast.—Tippoo Saib surprises general Matthews in a defile, and captures his detachment.—Death of sir Eyre Coote, the military saviour of India.—Hastings the political saviour.—Farther operations stopt by intelligence from Europe.—Europe.—Siege of Minorca by a great armament—the garrison after a gallant defence capitulates.—Fleets of France, Spain, and Holland.—Admiral Barrington intercepts part of a French convoy destined for the East Indies.—Exploit of captain Farvis.—Lord Howe prevents the Dutch fleet from sailing.—Combined fleets sail to the channel—disappointed, they return southward.—Loss of the Royal George and admiral Kempenfeldt.—Renewed preparations against Gibraltar—enormous battering ships—large army and fleet—the besiegers calculate that twenty-four hours would reduce Gibraltar.—Elliot anticipates their attack—pours red hot balls on their batteries—again destroys their preparations, and shows their hopes to be groundless—they again attempt to blockade.—Lord Howe sails to supply and relieve Gibraltar—effects his purpose in the face of a much superior fleet—offers the enemy battle, which they decline.—General purpose of Bourbon ambition against Britain frustrated.—Britain maintains the sovereignty of the sea.—The belligerent powers at length convinced that their hostilities are reciprocally ruinous.—Overtures for a general peace—the preliminaries signed at Paris.—Independence of America acknowledged.—Treaties between Britain and the respective powers.—General view of this arduous contest.—Her resistance against such a confederation of foes manifested the immense resources—lofty genius and invincible spirit of the British nation.—Folly of naval states provoking to hostilities, the mistress of the ocean.—Consequences proximate and eventual to the respective parties.

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West
Indies. The
French re-
cover St.
Eustatius to
the Dutch.

They in-
vest St.
Christo-
phers.

Bold at-
tempt of
sir Samuel
Hood to
relieve the
island.

IN the close of the year 1781, while the British fleet was unsuccessfully occupied in attempting to relieve the army in Virginia, the marquis de Bouillé, governor of Martinico, invaded St. Eustatius with two thousand men, easily subdued that island, being defended by only seven hundred men belonging to the thirteenth and fifteenth regiments. Besides the inferiority of force, the garrison having no expectations of such an attempt, were in a state of security, and indeed oscitancy, which greatly facilitated the success of their enemies. A considerable part of the effects captured by the British still remained on the island, so that it proved a very valuable prize. In the beginning of January, the French retook the Dutch settlements of Demarara and Essequibo, and by restoring them to Holland, confirmed the amity of the aristocratic party in that country towards their new ally. The count de Grasse was now returned from North America to the Leeward Islands, and commanded a fleet of thirty-two ships of the line. Sir Samuel Hood was also come back to Barbadoes. Trusting to their superiority, the French commanders made an attempt on the valuable Island of St. Christophers. The land forces under the command of de Bouillé, consisted of eight thousand men, escorted and seconded by the fleet. On the 11th of January, they effected a landing. The British garrison commanded by general Fraser, did not exceed six hundred men; taking possession however of a very strong post, the commandant fortified himself, in hopes of holding out till succour should arrive. The whole military force of Britain in those islands was inconsiderable; notwithstanding this consideration, and the comparative smallness of his naval force, sir Samuel Hood determined to venture one of those bold measures which have generally terminated with victory to British arms, and which in her relative situation to her foes, instead of being chargeable with temerity, are the wisest that can be pursued. He departed from Antigua, took on board general Prescott and the few troops that could be afforded, and immediately sailed to attack the enemy's fleet. The count de Grasse was much surprised at the appearance of the English fleet, and expecting to profit by what he deemed their rashness; thinking that by an increase of

searoom he could the more easily avail himself of his superior numbers, he moved away from shore. Sir Samuel Hood instantly saw the advantage that might be derived from the enemy's departure, and while they were forming their line ahead, pushed into the road which they had left. The enemy were not only astonished at the ability and judgment with which this design was conceived and formed, and the boldness and nautical skill with which it was executed, but alarmed at the consequences which must ensue from its success. They were apprehensive that the British fleet might cut off the communication between the French naval and military force. Hoping to overpower our armament by their numbers, they, on the 25th of January, attacked the rear of the squadron commanded by commodore Affleck; but that brave officer, seconded by lord Robert Manners and captain Cornwallis (heroes worthy of the marquis of Granby and earl Cornwallis), and the other ships of the division, repelled the enemy. The next day de Grasse made a general attack, but he was again repelled with severe loss; and sir Samuel Hood retained his position between the enemy's fleet and army, without any farther interruption. Meanwhile the French general had made considerable progress in the investment of the fort; but from the strength of the place, small as the garrison was, he found that a regular siege would be necessary. On the 16th of January he opened the trenches, proceeded with his works, and mounted his batteries, which soon played with terrible effect. The British continued to make the most gallant resistance: admiral Hood sent general Prescott ashore, in hopes to be able to assist the besieged; but finding the attempt impracticable, from the number and disposition of the enemy, reembarked his troops. The garrison, after having with the greatest patience and fortitude withstood the host of their enemies, became every day weaker both in number and fortifications; and at last finding all their efforts hopeless, agreed to a capitulation which was concluded on honourable terms. The French fleet being joined by two ships, admiral Hood, now, that the preservation of the island was no longer in view, resolved not to hazard an engagement until a reinforcement which was daily expected should arrive from

Skilful operations of that admiral;

but for want of a military force, ineffectual.

St. Christophers surrenders,

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and also
Nevis and
Montser-
rat.Apprehen-
sions for
Jamaica.

England; he therefore quitted his present situation, and retired towards Antigua. The islands of Nevis and Montserrat followed the fortune of St. Christophers; so that of all our former valuable possessions in the West Indies, Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Antigua, now only remained, and affairs wore a very inauspicious aspect to the British interests. Jamaica, the great object of Spanish ambition, was now proposed to be attacked by the count de Grasse, who was to be joined by a Spanish fleet and army for that purpose. The Spaniards had stationed at Hispaniola and Cuba, about twenty-six ships of the line and a considerable body of soldiers: the fleet, when combined, would amount to sixty ships of the line, the troops to about twenty thousand; and a great naval and military reinforcement was daily expected under admiral Guichen. The land force of Britain, in Jamaica, consisted of six battalions of regulars, amounting to two thousand four hundred men, and the militia about double that number. From the British fleet, so outnumbered, they could have expected little assistance. The goodness of the troops, the zeal and bravery of the inhabitants, together with the natural strength of the country, might have long withstood so mighty a host, and perhaps ultimately, with the assistance of the climate so peculiarly fatal to Spanish indolence, repelled the invaders: but the conflict would have been arduous, and a great part of the valuable property must have been destroyed during its operations; the well grounded apprehension therefore of such an attempt was extremely alarming to the islanders themselves, and to all interested in the fate of so estimable a possession. While affairs were in this situation, and the hopes and fears of the contending parties so anxiously aroused, intelligence arrived that Guichen's fleet and convoy, after their encounter with admiral Kempenfeldt, had been shattered by successive tempests; and unable to proceed on their voyage, returned to France, and two ships of the line only were strong enough to join de Grasse.

On the 19th of February, sir George Rodney with twelve ships of the line arrived from England at Barbadoes, and a few days after joining sir Samuel Hood, took command of the whole fleet before the end of the month;

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Lord Rodney arriving in the West Indies, resumes the command of the fleet.

Objects of the admirals.

De Grasse sails from Martinico.

Rodney pursues the enemy,

being reinforced by two more ships of the line from England, the British fleet consisted of thirty-six ships of the line. Having received information that a second convoy had sailed from Brest, in order to compensate to a certain degree the failure of the former, and was conveying provisions, naval and military stores, he tried to intercept it before it reached de Grasse; but the French convoy found means to elude the danger, and to join the admiral on the 20th of March, in fort Royal, where he was repairing his ships with a view of sailing as soon as possible to the westward: admiral Rodney stationed himself off St. Lucie to watch his motions. It was the object of the French admiral to avoid fighting, until he should join the Spaniards at Hispaniola; the British commander proposed to prevent the intended junction, and to bring the French to a decisive battle. The fate of the British West Indies depended on the success or miscarriage of the admiral's design; if the two hostile fleets joined, our naval force would no longer be able to preserve our islands from ruin. If Rodney could bring de Grasse to fight, the former having thirty-six ships of the line, the latter thirty-four, but balancing our superiority of number by size, weight of metal, and a greater multitude of men, the fleets would be very near an equality of physical force; consequently there could be little doubt that the ability, skill, and prowess of England would be triumphant. De Grasse was stationed at Martinico; admiral Rodney at Gros Islet bay in St. Lucie, and his fleet ready to sail, the van was commanded by admiral Drake, the rear by sir Samuel Hood, and the centre by Rodney himself. Frigates were disposed near the French fleet to give the English admiral intelligence if they sailed. Accordingly, on the 8th of April, news arrived that de Grasse had weighed anchor, and in a very short time the same day Rodney began to follow his course. De Grasse, in order to avoid the British fleet, instead of sailing directly westward to Hispaniola, chose a northern and circuitous course along the coast of Guadaloupe. Had he proceeded in the direct track which was to leeward, he thought he could not avoid being overtaken by the English, but by coasting between the islands, as the French were much better acquainted with these channels, he expected

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to baffle their pursuit. The British signals, however, were repeated with such quickness and exactness through the intervening stations, that the fleet sailed within five hours of the French, and came in sight of them that very same night near Dominica. De Grasse, thinking that a distant and running fight would be unavoidable, formed his line for that purpose. Early next morning when sir George Rodney was making dispositions for battle, he found himself becalmed. A breeze however reached the van between eight and nine in the morning, without extending to the centre and rear. The first division of the British fleet being thus separated from the rest, count de Grasse willingly engaged, hoping by his whole fleet to cut off the advanced part of ours. Notwithstanding the superiority of the enemy, sir Samuel Hood made so bold a stand as to sustain all their efforts, though not without his ships suffering material damage. At length Rodney himself being able to come up with part of the centre division, the battle became less unequal. De Grasse, who from the command of the wind could either fight closely or distantly, drew off his fleet, and before the rest of the British arrived, was entirely out of reach of battle. The next day admiral Rodney was obliged to employ in refitting the damaged ships, and transposing the van and rear, as those who had not been in the late action were the fittest for beginning a new conflict. On the 11th, the enemy's fleet weathered Guadaloupe, and got to such a distance that they were barely perceivable. About noon that day two of the enemy's ships were seen so much astern of the rest of the fleet, that the British had no doubt of cutting them off: a signal for general chase was thrown out. The pursuit was so vigorous that they would have been undoubtedly captured had not the whole French fleet returned for their protection. This movement gave the British commanders infinitely more delight, than they would have derived from the possession of the two ships. They perceived that the enemy could not avoid a close engagement, and during the night the line was formed in a most masterly disposition. The enemy, sensible that they must now fight, were also arranged with great skill. The scene of action was a bason of water lying between the islands of Guadaloupe,

and over-
takes them
off Guada-
loupe.

Dominica, the Saints, and Marigalante; and bounded both to windward and leeward by dangerous shores.

On the 12th of April, at seven in the morning, the hostile fleets met upon opposite tacks. The signal for close fighting was thrown out and punctually observed, the line was formed at only a cable's length distance; our ships as they came up ranged slowly and closely along the enemy's line, and under their lee, where they gave and received a tremendous fire. Admiral Drake, who now commanded the van, began the battle with the greatest gallantry; received, and with the most efficacious energy returned, the shot of the whole French line. His leading ship the Marlborough, commanded by captain Penny, was peculiarly distinguished, received and returned at the nearest distance the first broadside of twenty-three French ships of war, and had the fortune only to have three men killed, and sixteen wounded. As the ships were so near, every ball took effect, and the French ships being very full of men, great numbers were slain. The French made a most gallant resistance, which they were enabled to do the more effectually as the British rear was long prevented by a calm from taking any active share in the battle. They had fought five hours, before the British, though evidently the more forcible, had gained any decisive advantage; when between twelve and one o'clock, Rodney, with four ships, bore athwart the enemy, and **BROKE THEIR LINE**; being admirably supported by his division, he doubled upon them, separated their force, and threw them into irrecoverable disorder. As soon as he had effected this movement, he threw out a signal for the van to tack; admiral Drake instantly complying, by this means got to windward of the enemy, and completed the general confusion. The French van bore to leeward in an attempt to restore their broken line, but could not succeed. Meanwhile sir Samuel Hood had reached the scene of battle with part of his division, and contributed to crush the enemy. Even after all order and connected system was entirely destroyed on the part of the French, their ships singly and severally fought with the most inflexible courage. De Grasse himself, in the Ville de Paris, after the route became general, made a most obstinate resistance, but at last struck to sir Samuel

1782.
Battle of
the 12th of
April.

Gallant
efforts of
the
French.

At length,
Rodney
breaks the
line.

Gains a de-
cisive vic-
tory.

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Captures
the admiral, and
takes or
destroys a
great part
of the
French
fleet.

Hood. The Hector, the Glorieux, the Cæsar, of 74 guns, the Ardent of 64, were also captured; the Diadem was sunk; three thousand of the enemy were killed or drowned, and six thousand were wounded, and about two thousand taken prisoners: most of their ships that escaped being taken or sunk, were so damaged as to be unfit for service. The loss on the side of the English was about a thousand killed and wounded: among the slain was captain Blair, who eminently distinguished himself on that glorious day, and also had acquired great renown the year before, in the Dolphin man of war. Among the wounded was lord Robert Manners, brother to the duke of Rutland; this brave young nobleman, though not twenty-seven years of age, had acquired distinguished glory in the Resolution, a seventy-four gun ship, during a series of brilliant actions, which he crowned in the last conflict. His wound proved mortal, and deprived the country of his virtues a few weeks after the victory.

Principle
of naval
warfare il-
lustrated
by this vic-
tory.

Important
advantages.

NAVAL critics, in reviewing the operations which terminated in so brilliant a victory to Britain, have adduced, or at least confirmed general principles of the highest importance to the service. In the first place, they observed it illustrated the wise policy of a commander of British ships and British sailors being adventurously bold. If admiral Rodney, when he found the rear division becalmed, had endeavoured to avoid battle, the enemy might have escaped; it also showed, that in close fight British ships and seamen possess a very great superiority, and that the increase of their advantage in proportion to their closeness, renders it generally expedient for British commanders to break the enemy's line. The consequences of this victory were important and extensive, thirty-six chests of money, destined to pay the army and fleet in the West Indies, were found in the Ville de Paris.^b

THE day after the battle admiral Rodney endeavoured to pursue the remains of the French fleet, but was becalm-

^b This ship had a hundred and ten guns, and no less than thirteen hundred men, including soldiers, on board. She had been a present to Lewis XV from the city of Paris, during the low state of the French navy resulting from the last war in which that prince had been engaged with England. She had cost one hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds before she was fitted for sea, and was the only first-rate man of war that had ever been captured.

ed for three days at Guadaloupe. Sir Samuel Hood, having been but a short time in the fight, was fitter for pursuit than the other ships, the admiral therefore despatched that commander in hopes of overtaking or intercepting the remains of the enemy. On the 19th of April he captured two ships of the line in the Mona Passage, between Porto Rico and Hispaniola. Admiral Rodney proceeded with the disabled ships and prizes to Jamaica, was rejoined by sir Samuel Hood off cape Tiberoon, in St. Domingo; and in the end of April having arrived at the place of his destination, was received by the grateful islanders as their glorious deliverer. Rodney indeed had been the most brilliant promoter of naval glory, the effectual supporter of naval power, and beneficial protector of commerce and wealth to this country, of any personage whose actions reflected a lustre on the annals of the American war; in two years and a quarter he had struck a severe blow against each of our three European enemies. In his victory over the Spaniards, he broke that naval force which some months before ostentatiously paraded on our coasts; reducing the Dutch, he deprived them of the chief sinew of war; by the discomfiture of the French he completely overthrew all the mighty projects of the Bourbons for exalting themselves by ruining our plantations and marine force. He showed himself a gallant and skilful sailor and an able commander, that could direct all the excellence of British ships and British seamen. Such a commander supplied with a force equal to the enemy, was successful, and always must be successful. This victory not only secured our West India possessions, but in a great degree ended the West India war, as no operations of any importance were afterwards undertaken in that part of the world. Soon after sir George Rodney had so essentially served his king and country, intelligence arrived that the new administration had resolved he should serve no longer, and had appointed admiral Pigot to take the command in his stead. Whatever that gentleman's talents might be, his situation had never afforded him opportunities of such exertion or display as to demonstrate the policy of the minister, who, to avail himself of Mr. Pigot's professional efforts, superseded admiral Rodney.

Summary
of Rod-
ney's ex-
ploits
against our
three naval
enemies.

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He is created a peer.

Our gallant veteran relinquished a command in which he had now left so little undone, and returned home to enjoy the gratitude of his king and country, and the honours which had been conferred by his sovereign. The victorious admiral was called to the house of lords, because he had made the best of a force intrusted to his command, by conquering the enemy and discomfiting their designs. Sir Samuel Hood also, who next to admiral Rodney had so eminently distinguished himself, was promoted to the well earned honour of an Irish peerage. Messrs. Drake and Affleck for their respective services were created baronets.

North America.
Sir Henry Clinton resigns the command, and is succeeded by sir Guy Carleton. No active hostility.

IN North America sir Henry Clinton having resigned the command, was succeeded by sir Guy Carleton, but no military transactions of any importance took place in this campaign. The resolutions against the American war, and the negotiations for peace, although they did not induce the provincials to a separate treaty, yet in a great measure suspended hostilities. The armies, indeed, were nearly equal in strength; Carleton had no motive to attack the enemy for the sake of advancing in a country into which all progress was now renounced, and Washington had no inducement to assail a force which was still very formidable. The Spaniards finding all their hopes of important conquest in the West Indies disappointed, employed their armaments in less considerable enterprises. The governor of Cuba, with five thousand men, made an attack on the Bahama islands, which being defended by about two hundred only, capitulated. The French, with the remainder of their beaten fleet, concerted a predatory expedition against the property of the Hudson's Bay company, and acquired a considerable booty. On the other hand, the English made a successful excursion to the Musquito shore, and captured fort Dalin, with a great number of Spanish troops.

IN Africa the Dutch was dispossessed of most of their settlements, except the cape of Good Hope; but they were still able to retain this important key to India.

East Indies.

WHILE in the Carnatic those warlike preparations were carrying on which are narrated among the transactions of 1780 and 1781, the governor general was not

inactive in Bengal. Aware of the dispositions of the native powers to join in the confederacy against British India, it was an important part of his duty to counteract their designs. He had also the task of providing resources and means of defence against both treacherous friends and professed enemies. The expenses of the present war, in which all the English presidencies were so deeply, and one at least dangerously involved, rose to such a height, that even the finances of Bengal proved unequal to their supply. It was therefore necessary, not only to be very strict in exacting the revenue, but either to create new sources or to relinquish the defence of our possessions in India. The governor general anxiously desirous of securing such valuable interests, appeared to think that the preservation of British India might justify measures that nothing but political necessity could sanction. The Indian land holders are called zemindars, and the chief zemindars are called rajahs. The great estates appeared to have held of the mogul, as lord paramount of the soil: the inferior zemindars to have held of the rajahs. A doubt was alleged, whether the tenure of the zemindars was stable on the performance of certain conditions, or dependent on the discretion of the superior in the various degrees, from the lowest tenant to the emperor. The former mode would unquestionably be the most consonant to the ideas of free-born Britons, but the latter was no less agreeable to the analogy of Mahomedan despotism. Whatever power the emperor himself possessed over the lands or effects of the zemindars, he delegated to the collectors of revenues, and consequently had transferred to the India company over the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, by the treaty concluded in 1764. The extent and limits of the jurisdiction which by this treaty the company acquired over either the lands or effects of the inhabitants, were to be defined not by any reference to British rules of property, but by the usage and laws of India. Lord Clive, at the treaty of Illahabad, had guaranteed to Bulwart Sing, the zemindary of Benares, subject to the payment of the former revenue to the nabob of Oude. The guarantee did not extend to the rajah's family, and on the death of Bulwart Sing, in 1770, it appeared that the zemindary of Benares

Pecuniary deficiencies.

Schemes of Mr. Hastings to procure resources for the war. The Zemindars, and the tenure of their possessions.

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1782.

Cheyt Sing.

Mr. Hastings's views of the rajah's relation to the company.

was not hereditary, as Cheyt Sing, the late rajah's son, paid to the nabob a fine of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, with an increase of rent of three hundred thousand pounds, in order to be admitted to his father's tenements.^c The nabob afterwards endeavoured to extort one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds more from his vassal, which, though prevented by the interference of Mr. Hastings, afforded a presumptive proof of the discretionary tenure by which the zemindary was held. In 1775, under Sujah Dowla, the nabob of Oude, the sovereignty of Benares was transferred to the company, and thus Cheyt Sing became vassal to that body on precisely the same tenure as he had before been to the nabob of Oude. Mr. Hastings, soon after this agreement, authorized his resident to assure Cheyt Sing of the company's approbation of his conduct, and on that account that he should be allowed to occupy the zemindary on the same conditions as before, and at the same time recommended him to raise a body of two thousand horse. Mr. Hastings from the analogy of Indian tenures, considered Cheyt Sing as a tenant at will, with a general promise of holding his lands during good behaviour, and thought himself the steward of the proprietor, entitled to interpret the goodness of the tenant's conduct, by the fidelity and gratitude which he should manifest towards the proprietors, from whose bounty he was allowed to retain his lands.^d The requisite exertions might be greater or less according to circumstances: it was evident that the terms on which he held Benares were extremely advantageous, and as obviously Mr. Hastings appeared to conceive that his tenure was good conduct and attachment to the company. His dispositions, the state of affairs soon put to the test: intelligence being received of the war with France, and a variety of circumstances having intimated the design of a native confederacy, it was determined by the governor general and council, in the month of July 1778, that the rajah Cheyt Sing should be required to contribute an extraordinary subsidy of five lacks of rupees towards the expenses which this new exi-

^c Annual Register, 1783, chap. I. ^d This may be gathered from his defence, and the writings of his friends.

1782.

A subsidy
is granted
with great
reluctance.

Hastings
repeats his
demand.

gency would impose on government during the current year. The rajah paid this advanced rent with great unwillingness; the next year he testified much stronger reluctance, although the increase of hostilities rendered supplies still more indispensably necessary; and though known to be extremely rich, pretended to be in the most distressing poverty. Mr. Hastings found him so slow in his payments, that he sent two battalions of seapoys to Benares to be paid and subsisted by the rajah, until he made good the required sum. The third year he made still stronger professions of poverty, and the subsidy was procured with greater difficulty. In 1781, when the designs of the confederacy had not only unfolded themselves, but in the Carnatic were carried into successful execution, the same additional subsidy was demanded, and also the two thousand horse which he had been desired to keep in readiness when protection was promised him by the company on his first having become their vassal. It is to be observed, that the whole amount of the extraordinary subsidy imposed, from so urgent a necessity, on this tributary, was only one-fifth of his yearly rent; that he was extremely rich, and could well afford the addition, which was much less than his former superior, or any other native chief acting upon the discretionary principles of Asiatic governments, would have exacted. Even after paying the demand, he was not in a worse, but in a better situation as the tenant of the company, than that in which he would have been as the tenant of Oude, or any other oriental state. The rajah baffled the demands by repeated evasions, and at this time (the beginning of 1781), when the possessions of the company were in the greatest danger, and her want of assistance both in men and money most urgent, Cheyt Sing much more manifestly displayed his reluctance to contribute aid than in preceding years. All the countries adjoining the rajah's territories were either openly or secretly engaged in the combination; from that circumstance, together with the rajah's unwillingness to support the cause of the company, the governor general suspected Cheyt Sing to be connected with the hostile con-

^c See Annual Register, 1783, c. i.; and Thompson's War in Asia.

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Hastings
proceeds
to Benares
to enforce
compli-
ance.

Conduct of
Cheyt
Sing's peo-
ple.

federacy. Various accounts, both from English residents at Benares, and the neighbouring countries, confirmed the suspicion. Mr. Hastings now being extremely straitened from want of money for paying the company's troops and other services, and farther desirous of exploring the intentions and designs both of the rajah and others who professed amity, resolved to make a progress into the upper country. Impressed with an opinion of the rajah's culpability, the governor general had privately resolved that, if on examination he found him really hostile, the punishment of treacherous designs to injure the company should be such a fine as would relieve their present exigencies.

Accordingly he proceeded to Benares: the rajah met him on the frontiers, expressed his complete submission, made protestations of the most zealous fidelity and attachment to the company, and declared that his zemindary and all his possessions were the gift of the company, and at their command. Mr. Hastings little moved with these general professions of friendship, after arriving at Benares, made specific charges of infidelity and disaffection to the English government from which he held his zemindary; of internal tyranny and oppression, contrary to the tenure of his vassallage; and of evasion respecting the payment of subsidies. The rajah denied these charges, and endeavoured to refute them, but not to the governor's satisfaction: to make him more compliant, he put Cheyt Sing under an arrest. The inhabitants of Benares rushed in great numbers upon a small party of two companies which guarded Sing's person, cut them to pieces, and rescued the rajah. The governor himself was in considerable danger, having but a small body of attendants in the midst of a hostile multitude. Finding the disorderly spirit of the people, he sent for troops from different quarters to come to Benares; the rajah fled to a distant place of refuge, from thence he sent a suppliant letter, to which Mr. Hastings made no answer. A war broke out in Benares; the governor soon subdued that country, and took possession of the treasures of the rajah. Immense sums were found in his treasury, which proved that his excuses of poverty were totally unfounded. Cheyt Sing published a manifesto addressed to other rajahs, in which he attempted to

justify himself, and stir up his neighbours against the British name, and immediately afterwards retired into banishment.

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1782.

He flies
from Be-
nares.
Alleged
disaffection
and machi-
nations of
the be-
gums.

MR. HASTINGS considering this insurrection at Benares as a rebellion, deemed it part of the great combination against British India. It appeared to him that Cheyt Sing had been warmly supported by the neighbouring province of Oude, especially in the countries that were governed by the begums, or dowager princesses, who according to the customs of India had, for the support of their widowhood, the investiture of certain demesnes and treasures under the name of jaghires. The begums of Oude were the mother and grandmother of the reigning prince. The nabob came down to Chunar, with the professed intention of paying his respects to the governor general, accompanied with a considerable number of troops: Mr. Hastings by no means approved of this visit, he had no occasion for the nabob for quelling the commotions in Benares, and was not without suspicions of the treachery so incidental to the feeble and timid characters of oriental despotism; not, however, choosing to communicate to the nabob his distrust, he expressed his acknowledgments for his kind attention, and at Chunar they met. Mr. Hastings being well informed of the proceedings of the begums, consulted with sir Elijah Impey, whether, they being in actual rebellion, the nabob might not confiscate their property; sir Elijah answered in the affirmative. Fortified with this authority, Mr. Hastings appeared to entertain no doubt of the legality of the principle; but it was necessary to the purposes of equity and justice to examine the fact; in this investigation he requested the assistance of the judge, who undertook to collect testimonies, and the result was, that the begums had abetted the rebellion of Cheyt Sing. Having ascertained this fact to his satisfaction, and also, that they were hostile to the government of the nabob himself, he entered into a treaty with that prince; one article of which was, that as great distress had arisen to the nabob's government, from the military power and dominion assumed by the begums, he should be permitted to resume such of their lands as he might deem to be necessary. As the nabob acknowledged a great debt to the

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At the instance of Mr. Hastings, their treasures are confiscated.

Mr. Hastings detaches the Mahratta prince from the confederacy of native powers.

Suffrein expects to crush the British naval force ;

company, the proceeds of the confiscation were to be applied to liquidate that demand, and consequently to increase the pecuniary resources of the company when supplies where so much wanted. The nabob having returned to Oude, and not having immediately proceeded to the forfeiture stipulated in the treaty, was strongly urged not only to seize a part, but the whole of the effects as confiscated in consequence of the rebellion : that prince at last enforced the act, and dispossessed the begums of all their treasures.^f Such was the procedure of Hastings respecting Cheyt Sing and the begums, which the narrator considers, with its ostensible reasons, as part of the series of British affairs in India that it is his duty to relate; though he conceives it unnecessary to canvass all the assertions and attempted arguments, all the replies and attempted refutations, that arose from this subject. Leaving the moral rectitude and judicial legality of Mr. Hastings's conduct with the appropriate tribunal by which it has been already discussed, the history proceeds to the political effects of the expedition. It afforded the company the means of paying their troops, increasing their resources, and redoubling their exertions against the combined enemies. It prevented the native powers from effectually joining the confederacy, and served also to detach one important sovereign, Moodejee Scindia, the Mahratta prince, from the alliance. A peace was concluded, in October 1781, between him and Mr. Hastings;^g so that, on the whole, the measures of Mr. Hastings, at this time very essentially served the British cause.

THE French, we have seen, had formed expectations of ruining the British interests, through themselves and the confederacies which they instigated in the eastern as well as the western world ; and with that view sent a squadron with a powerful body of forces, under monsieur Suffrein, to India. Sailing from the cape of Good Hope, Suffrein joined monsieur de Orves at the island of Mauritius : the French commander, with a fleet of ten ships of the line, one fifty gun ship, several large frigates, and

^f Annual Register, 1783, chap. i.

^g Ibid. and Thompson's War in Asia.

a multitude of transports and store vessels, having on board a numerous body of land forces, sailed in January 1782, for the coast of Coromandel; M. de Orves dying on the passage, the sole command of the fleet devolved on M. de Suffrein. A British convoy, under general Meadows, was proceeding with troops for India, and two ships of the line and two fifties; the Hannibal, one of the latter, was taken by the enemy; but the rest of the fleet reached Madras, the place of their destination. On the 31st of January sir Edward Hughes was obliged to sail from Trincomale for Madras, to procure a supply of stores and provisions, and refit his ships. At his arrival on the 8th of February, he was informed by lord Macartney, the new governor, that a French armament amounting to thirty sail had been seen on the coast, and was supposed not to be above twenty leagues to the northward. Admiral Hughes had only six ships of the line, with the crews in a very indifferent condition, when he was the following day reinforced by the two ships of the line and one of fifty guns, which were just arrived from England. Sir Eyre Coote with great alacrity and expedition assisted him in manning his ships from the land forces; and having now his stores and provisions on board, on the 15th of February he saw the French fleet bearing directly to Madras, with ten sail of the line, two fifties, and six frigates. Suffrein had expected to find only six English ships of the line, and hastened, in all the vivacity of French fancy, hoping to overpower the English fleet, and thereby cooperate so effectually with Hyder Ally as to reduce Madras; and by a little farther extension of the imagination, anticipated the speedy ruin of British India. The pleasing reverie of Suffrein met with a disagreeable interruption in the view of nine ships of war prepared to obstruct his progress: on this discovery he immediately stopped, and soon after drew off his fleet to the southward.^h Admiral Hughes immediately followed, and the next day is dis-
descried the French ships of war to the eastward: while pointed.
the convoy escorted by frigates was steering south towards Pondicherry, the British admiral threw out a signal for

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Various
conflicts
between
him and sir
Edward
Hughes,

chase, with the double view of capturing the convoy and inducing the French admiral to return to attempt their relief. In the course of the pursuit the British ships retook five English prizes with their crews and cargoes, and captured a sixth, that proved to be a very important advantage: she was a large French transport of thirteen hundred tons, containing a considerable train of artillery and a great quantity of gunpowder and other military stores for Hyder Ally, with three hundred soldiers on board. Meanwhile the French fleet endeavouring to assist the convoy, obliged the British admiral to recal the chasers; and having ordered the prizes to be sent to Negapatam, he prepared to form the line of battle. On the 17th of February, early in the morning, the admiral threw out the signal for forming in a compact order, so as to prevent the enemy from profiting by their superiority; but the weather was extremely unfavourable to the collection of his ships. The enemy perceiving the British squadron, notwithstanding every effort of both commander and officers, to be still dispersed, attacked the rear, while the rest were by a calm prevented from taking a share in the action. The British ships that were engaged were much shattered and in danger of being entirely wrecked, when a favourable wind rising, enabled the others to bear down on the enemy with force and effect, but darkness intervening prevented the battle; and during the night the French fleet sailed away to the northeast. In this unequal contest, though the event was not decisive, two English captains were killed; Stevens of the *Superb*, and Reynolds of the *Exeter*; and these two ships were so much damaged, that Hughes found it necessary to proceed to Trincomale for repairs. There he expected to meet a convoy with troops and stores from England, which he intended to escort to Madras: he however found only part of the convoy; but was joined by two seventy-four gun ships. Having refitted his squadron, he coasted southwards, and, on the 8th of April, saw the French fleet to the northeast, but at a considerable distance: in three days he arrived off the coast of Ceylon. The enemy meanwhile having gained the wind, and knowing the bay to be extremely rocky, resolved to attack the British under the disadvantage of a

lee shore and a very dangerous road; and on the 12th of April forming their line with superior numbers, favourable wind, and situation, they prepared for the onset. The English admiral under these disadvantages arrayed his fleet; the battle began about noon; both sides fought with great fury; and the French finding, notwithstanding their multiplied advantages, they could make no impression on the British, drew off their ships. Although these actions were not decisive, yet they proved very beneficial to the British. Hyder Ally had entered the Carnatic in full reliance that the naval force of France would crush the English, that thereby he should capture Madras, depose the nabob of Arcot, and place his son Tippoo in his stead. Expecting the promised and destined squadron, he had with the prospects of 1782 consoled himself for the disappointments of 1781; but on finding the French with so great a superiority of numbers repeatedly retiring, he began to be convinced of the vast superiority of British prowess, and to despair of accomplishing his favourite objects. The other Indian powers received the same impression in a greater degree, and became less disposed to hostilities, which they now apprehended would be ultimately unavailing.

though not decisive, prove favourable to the British interests.

SIR EYRE COOTE's plan of the campaign was to divert Hyder's force, into detached operations, while he himself pressing on him with the main army, should oblige him to evacuate the Carnatic. Major Abingdon at the beginning of the year arrived in Tillicherry, then blockaded by a considerable part of Hyder's troops; by a bold and well conducted sally, he entirely defeated the Mysorean, and compelled him to raise the blockade and retreat from the coast. Another British detachment was stationed to protect Tanjore, to repress the designs of Hyder Ally and the French on that side of Pondicherry, and to cooperate from the south with the main army. This body, consisting of two thousand foot and two hundred and fifty horse, commanded by colonel Braithwaite, was posted on the river Coleroon; and in consequence of the recent defeat of Hyder's troops at Tillicherry, was not apprehensive that the enemy would approach the seacoast. Tippoo Saib understanding the security of the English

Campaign of sir Eyre Coote against Hyder Ally.

Colonel Braithwaite's corps surprised and defeated by Tippoo Saib

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1782.

Signal victory of sir
Eyre
Coote at
Redhill.

detachment, formed a plan for surprising and surrounding the corps, with about four hundred French and twenty thousand native troops. He was but too successful, and though the British force made the most skilful and gallant resistance, they were overpowered by numbers. The humanity of the French commander saved the remains of the British troops from being massacred by Tippoo's barbarians; but those who survived the defeat were obliged to undergo the miseries of a long and cruel imprisonment. By this disaster the southern parts of the Carnatic were exposed, and the arrival of a considerable body of French troops from the Mauritius made the state of the English more critical. These forces, joined by a numerous body from Mysore, besieged Cuddalore, and soon compelled it to capitulate; while Hyder Ally watched the motions of sir Eyre Coote. After this capture they made an attempt upon Vandiwash. Sir Eyre Coote marched to its relief, both to protect an important post, and in the hopes that Hyder Ally, trusting to the efficacy of his European auxiliaries, would hazard a battle; the Mysorean, however, cautiously avoided an engagement, and relinquishing Vandiwash, retired backwards two days march, and posted himself in a very strong situation at a place called Redhill. General Coote pursued him thither, attacked him on the 2d of June, defeated him, put his troops to the route, killed great numbers, and would have gained a much more decisive victory had he possessed cavalry to pursue the fugitives. The battle of the 2d of June obliged the enemy to retire far into the interior country, and completed the discomfiture of Hyder's designs. This aspiring adventurer, with a comprehensiveness of genius, a firmness, and magnanimity of mind, not unworthy of the highest European capacity and heroism, had projected to become master of the Indian empire; and for that purpose, to make tools of the French and native powers, in a confederacy for expelling the English, the great obstacles to the accomplishment of the lofty projects of his ambition. In the scenes of his personal enterprise, he and his European auxiliaries were counteracted and baffled by British prowess directed by the skill and abilities of a Hughes and a Coote, while in the more distant regions of

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Hyder Ally completely discomfited.

His death.

Worn out by fatigue, sir Eyre Coote resigns the command.

his political operations, he had to contend with the penetrating sagacity, profound and powerful genius of a Hastings. He was already apprised of the successful efforts of the governor general in impairing the confederacy, by reducing disaffected allies, and persuading opposite states to a separate peace. He was apprehensive that the same energetic character would finish the enmity of other powers, and that the force of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, might ultimately be exerted against Mysore alone. These disappointments of past hopes and fears of future evils preyed on the mind of Hyder Ally, affected his health, and spread a langour over his subsequent measures and actions: he withdrew to his capital, where some months after he died. The constitution of sir Eyre Coote was so greatly affected by the fatigues which he had undergone, that he was unable to keep the field any longer; he therefore retired to Madras, leaving the command to major general Stuart. The enemy cautiously abstaining from battle, and the British commander not being able to compel an engagement, no event of much importance happened by land during the rest of the campaign. The French fleet having refitted in the island of Ceylon, returned to the coast of Coromandel; and understanding that a reinforcement was daily expected to join the English squadron, sailed to Negapatam before the supplies should arrive. Hughes, immediately on descrying the foe, formed his line of battle; the contest began; the enemy were thrown into disorder; several of their ships were greatly disabled, and they expected a complete defeat, when an unfavourable wind prevented the British from reaping the fruits of the victory, or retarding the retreat of the French. During the battle, a French ship of the line struck her colours, but afterwards, in defiance of the established laws of war and of nations, when the British ship trusted to the surrender of her antagonist, fired into her; and the unfavourable wind unfortunately kept the British captain from punishing the infamous treachery. Suffrein retired to Cuddalore to refit: fresh troops having arrived from France, with two more ships of the line, he with his fleet and land forces sailed to Trincomale, which they took by surprise. Both sir Eyre Coote and sir Edward Hughes were very anxious for the

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preservation of this important possession, and the admiral immediately sailed to its relief. A fourth naval action took place in which the English, though still inferior in force, after a very hard fought battle, again compelled the enemy to retreat with great loss of men, and their ships very much disabled. This was the last conflict between the two fleets in the campaign of 1782.

Hastings
succeeds in
putting an
end to the
Indian con-
federacy.

IN northern India, Mr. Hastings was successfully engaged in detaching powers from the hostile combination. Having by colonel Muir concluded a peace with Moodajee Sindia, he procured the mediation of that chieftain to negotiate a treaty with the Mahrattas, which was concluded by Mr. Anderson as envoy of the governor general and council. The Mahrattas engaged to suffer no Europeans but the English to establish factories on their coast; to have no intercourse with any others, except the Portuguese anciently settled in those countries, and to join in compelling the prince of Mysore to restore whatever possessions he had wrested from the English or their allies.

Operations
of sir Ed-
ward
Hughes.

SIR EDWARD HUGHES having returned to Madras, was exposed to great danger from a hurricane: fortunately his fleet escaped without loss, but much damage was suffered by mercantile ships. The larger part of the crop of rice being destroyed, produced a famine which cut off great numbers of the natives; but the vigilant attention of the governor general and the council of Calcutta tended powerfully to alleviate the calamity. There being no naval dock on the coast of Coromandel, sir Edward Hughes sailed round to Bombay, to be thoroughly repaired: there he was joined by the long expected squadron under sir Richard Bickerton. The councils of Calcutta and Bombay, now freed from the Mahratta war, directed their views to Tippoo Saib, and proposed to make a powerful diversion on the Malabar coast. To enable the government of Bombay to carry on the war with vigour and effect, the supreme council sent them fifteen lacks of rupees from the treasury of Calcutta, which was now by the policy of Mr. Hastings well supplied; and, instead of wanting money for that settlement itself, was able to assist the other presidencies.

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1782.
Expedition
against
Mysore,
from the
Malabar
coast.

In the close of 1782, colonel Humberstown, with a considerable body of troops, was despatched to the Malabar coast; and after having made progress in the maritime parts, ventured to penetrate into the interior country, where he was repulsed with loss, closely pursued, and involved in a very dangerous situation. Tippoo Saib, informed that the British commander was so far advanced, hastened after him, but Humberstown by forced marches reached Paniary, where colonel Macleod was just arrived from Madras with a body of troops. Tippoo Saib immediately followed, and invested the town, of which Macleod, as elder officer, took the command: the bravery of the British compelled Tippoo to raise the siege, and he returned with great expedition to the Carnatic. General Matthews having been sent from Bombay to the relief of colonel Humberstown, received on his way intelligence of Tippoo Saib's discomfiture and retreat. Encouraged by this information, he attacked the city of Onore, the capital of Bednore (called also Canara); he took it by storm, nor was he able to prevent the outrages incidental to that mode of capture. Matthews penetrated into the country, took other towns and fortresses by assault, and though the detail of his operations be not accurately known, yet it would appear from the general outlines communicated to the public, that very unnecessary, and consequently very unjustifiable cruelties were committed. About this time died sir Eyre Coote, who had rendered such very important services to the British interests in India. Having found the company's fortune at Madras at the lowest ebb in 1781, he, with a very inferior force, that year effectually checked the progress of the Indian conqueror; and in the next entirely overthrew his projects. He indeed, seconded by sir Edward Hughes, may be considered as the immediate military saviour of the Carnatic, in cooperation with Mr. Hastings, the political saviour of India.

Death of
sir Eyre
Coote, the
military
saviour of
India.

Hastings
the politi-
cal saviour.

SIR EDWARD HUGHES arrived at Madras with his fleet in April 1783, and on the 2d of May set sail in quest of the enemy. His strength was considerably weakened by sickness; they, however, sought an action with the enemy, who gave them battle on the 20th of June, in which the French, having the advantage of the wind prevented a

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1782.

Tippoo
Saib sur-
prises gen-
eral Mat-
thews.

close engagement. Sir Edward Hughes returned for supplies and provisions to Madras ; but before he was ready to sail again, intelligence arrived from Europe which stopped his intended operations.

TIPPOO SULTANⁱ having surprised, and by superior numbers overpowered Matthews' band, and retaken some of the towns which that general had captured, turned the siege of the rest into a blockade. General Stuart, now commander in the Carnatic, made it his chief object to expel the French, who were reinforced by a fresh body of soldiers under the marquis de Bussy, and assisted by a detachment of Tippoo's troops. After he had evacuated Mysore himself with his main army, he sent colonels Long and Fullerton to invade the southern parts of Tippoo's dominions ; and these commanders overran the whole Coimbatour country. The French were strongly fortified at Cuddalore : this town Stuart determined to besiege ; and having spent the month of May in making preparations, he marched in the beginning of June. On the 7th, seconded admirably by all his officers and soldiers, and natives, he carried the outworks of the enemy ; some days after, repulsed a very vigorous and well conducted sally, and made such approaches as were likely to ensure success, when orders from Europe put a stop to hostilities.

Further
operations
stopped by
intelli-
gence
from Eu-
rope.
Siege of
Minorca
by a great
armament.

THE first scene of warlike operations in Europe in the year 1782, was Minorca. The Spaniards had made very great preparations to recover this ancient possession : thither were sent sixteen thousand land forces, with a train of artillery, consisting of one hundred and nine pieces of the heaviest cannon, and thirty-six great mortars. The English garrison amounted to only two thousand six hundred and ninety-two men ; and the whole force of Britain was so appropriated to various services, that no addition could be spared for the relief of Minorca. The fortress was in some respects very strong, but its works were so numerous and extensive, as to require at least six thousand men for effectual defence, so that the present number was totally inadequate. Notwithstanding the vast advantage

ⁱ He assumed the title of Sultan on the death of his father. See Annual Register, 1783.

possessed by the enemy, their king endeavoured to increase it by instigating treachery; a bribe was offered to the governor, general Murray: the gallant veteran treated the attempt with the generous indignation of a man of integrity and honour, solicited to become a villain. The enemy finding their insidious proffers rejected with merited scorn, proceeded to invest St. Philips. In August 1781, they had cut off all communication between the fort and the country; and though there was no want of other provisions, they were debarred from supplies of vegetables. This privation was the more severely felt, as they were obliged to live on salted meats: the scurvy soon began to rage, and was accompanied by a putrid fever, which carried off great numbers of the garrison, while others were daily falling by the cannonade of the enemy. Notwithstanding these multiplied evils, the defenders displayed the utmost valour and constancy, and made several successful sallies. Though by their artillery they daily impaired the numbers of the British, the enemy employed five months in constructing their works. In the beginning of February, the garrison was so much reduced by sickness, that there were only six hundred and sixty men left who were in any degree fit for duty; and of these, all but one hundred were so far tainted with the scurvy, that the physicians and surgeons declared they could hold out only a very few days before they must be sent to the hospital; they likewise affirmed, that longer perseverance in defence must prove the inevitable destruction of the remains of that brave garrison. There was, they said, no possible remedy for the sick, nor means even of keeping the greater part of them much longer alive, but by a speedy relief of wholesome air, aided by an abundant supply of vegetables. It was also apprehended that the enemy, knowing the weakness of the garrison, would now, that their works were finished, attempt to carry it by assault. From all these considerations, the governor thought it necessary to capitulate, and obtained the most honourable terms.

MEANWHILE preparations were making on both sides for the naval campaign. The armaments which France, Spain, and Holland, had equipped to act against Great Britain on the European seas, contained seventy ships of

After a gallant defence the garrison capitulates, Feb. 5th. Fleets of France, Spain, and Holland.

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Admiral
Barrington
intercepts
a French
convoy
destined
for the
East Indies.Exploit of
captain
Jervis.

the line. As our force for the home service was very inferior to the fleets of the enemy if united, the object of the first importance was to prevent their junction, and weaken them by separate attacks: the second was to protect our numerous convoys, without departing so far as to leave our coasts unguarded; and the third, to relieve Gibraltar. On the 13th of April, admiral Barrington, with twelve ships of the line and several frigates, sailed towards the bay of Biscay. On the 20th, he descried a fleet; that proved to be a convoy destined for the East Indies, to supply the loss incurred by the dispersion and capture of the former transports. They had sailed from Brest only the day before, escorted by the *Protecteur* and *Pegase* of seventy-four guns, the *Actionnaire* of sixty-four, and a frigate. The British admiral having made a signal for general chase, captain Jervis, of the *Foudroyant* of seventy-four guns, so far outstripped the rest during the night, that in the morning he was out of sight of the fleet. The French commander ordering the convoy to disperse, and the *Protecteur* having a large sum of money on board, it was agreed that the other two ships should keep the enemy employed, while she made the best of her way. In a short time captain Jervis overtook the *Pegase*, both ships were fresh from the harbour, and were nearly equal in force. A very fierce action ensued, in which, notwithstanding the most valiant efforts of the enemy, British seamanship and discipline so completely prevailed, as that near a hundred of the French were killed, and a much greater number wounded; though not one Briton was killed, and but very few wounded: after a conflict of an hour, the French ship surrendered. The *Pegase* being extremely disabled, captain Maitland of the *Queen* took her in charge, while the *Foudroyant* proceeded in the chase. Captain Maitland having taken three hundred of the prisoners out of the *Pegase*, sent lieutenant Bisset with a party on board to guard the rest, and take direction of the prize. Immediately after, a French ship of war appeared, which he understood to be the *Protecteur*, he ordered the lieutenant with a cutter that was in company, to conduct the *Pegase* into an English port, while he himself, incumbered as he was with prisoners, pursued the

enemy. A chase of fourteen hours brought him up with the Frenchman, when, after the first broadside, she, to his great surprise, struck her colours, and proved to be the *Actionnaire*, having on board two hundred and fifty seamen, and five hundred and fifty soldiers. The other pursuers were also successful, and took twelve ships of the convoy, having on board about a thousand soldiers. After this very successful cruise, extremely boisterous weather obliged the admiral to return to port, where he arrived in the end of the month. Captain Jervis was immediately after made a knight of the bath, an honour destined to be prelude to a more splendid mark of his sovereign's favour, earned by the exertion of the same heroic qualities on a much wider field. Intelligence being received that the Dutch fleet was preparing to come out of the Texel, lord Howe sailed with twelve ships of the line to the coast of Holland, either to intercept or confine the enemy; but finding they were not disposed to venture to the North Seas, and that the combined fleets of France and Spain had set sail, he returned to join admiral Kempenfeldt at Portsmouth. In the beginning of June, Guichen, who had been some months stationed at Cadiz, and don Louis de Cordova, sailed with twenty-five ships of the line, and in their progress northward were joined by about twenty more. With this mighty force, steering to the channel, they intercepted part of a Newfoundland convoy; but the most valuable portion, together with the escorting ships of war, escaped. The enemy being now in the mouth of the channel, great apprehensions were entertained concerning a homeward bound fleet of merchantmen from Jamaica, protected by only three ships of the line, under sir Peter Parker. Lord Howe sailed in the beginning of July, accompanied by the admirals Barrington, sir John Lockart Ross, and Kempenfeldt. This fleet amounted to no more than twenty-two sail of the line: therefore the object was to receive the Jamaica fleet, and baffle the attempts of the enemy, without being forced to an engagement with so very superior an armament. The abilities and professional skill of this great man, so well seconded, very dexterously and completely accomplished these purposes. The combined fleets neither intercepted our trade, nor could effect a

Combined
fleets sail to
the channel.

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Disappointed they return southward.

Loss of the Royal George, and admiral Kempenfeldt.

junction with the Dutch: and, finding they could derive no advantage from continuing in the channel, retired from our coasts. The British fleet having returned to Portsmouth, an accidental calamity befel one of our ships, involving in it circumstances that caused a deep concern throughout the nation. While other ships were receiving some necessary repairs, the Royal George, of one hundred guns was found to require a slight species of careen, which can be executed by laying a vessel, in a certain degree, on her side, without the trouble and delay of taking her into dock. On the 29th of August this business was undertaken; the ship was crowded with people from the shore, especially about three hundred women, besides about nine hundred of the crew. The carpenters had moved the ship a kreak more on her side than was intended; when, about ten o'clock in the morning, a sudden squall arising, threw her fatally upon her side, and her gunports being open, and the motion of the cannon increasing the violence of the shock, she was almost instantly filled with water, and went to the bottom. The admiral, with a considerable number of his officers, and about nine hundred of the crew and visitors, perished at this melancholy moment. The Royal George was the largest and strongest ship in the British navy; had been the seat of command under most of our distinguished admirals, especially lord Hawke, in his celebrated battle with Conflans. Admiral Kempenfeldt^k was very eminent for professional science, knowledge, and judgment, and deemed unrivalled in the art of manœuvring; being besides amiable and estimable as a man, he was universally lamented.

Renewed preparations against Gibraltar.

HAVING protected our coasts and our trade, and prevented the junction of the Bourbon fleets with the Dutch, Britain now directed her naval attention to the relief of Gibraltar. From the surrender of Minorca, the king of Spain hoped the key of the Mediterranean would be the next acquisition. The duke de Crillon, a French nobleman, who had commanded at Minorca, undertook the supreme conduct of the siege: he was assisted by a great number of the best officers of both countries, and

^k He was son to colonel Kempenfeldt, exhibited by the Spectator, under the name of captain Sentry.

particularly of the most skilful engineers and artilleryists of his own. An immense increase of land and sea forces was brought both from France and Spain to aid the troops already before Gibraltar; and many of the nobility from both countries came to serve as volunteers. Two princes of the blood royal of France, one of them the king's own brother, the count d'Artois, sought glory by combating the brave British garrison and its illustrious commander. In the spirit of loyalty which was then diffused through the French soldiers, the presence of their princes excited an enthusiastic desire of distinguishing themselves before so adored witnesses: the same spirit pervaded the Spaniards, and both became impatient for action. The besiegers had prepared new and extraordinary machines; battering ships, which, though of an astonishing bulk, could go through all their evolutions with the ease and dexterity of frigates. Twelve hundred pieces of heavy ordnance were to play from land and sea, besides a large floating battery, and five bomb-ketches. The land and naval troops by which these operations were to be carried on, amounted to forty thousand men, besides the combined fleet of fifty ships of the line, that was to cover and support the attack. While dispositions were making for so tremendous an assault, the besiegers amused themselves with calculations of the exact time in which Gibraltar would be taken; some said the garrison would hold out twelve hours after the onset commenced; other, less sanguine, thought it would last sixteen; and some, though very few, allowed, even twenty-four for the completion of the conquest.¹

Enemy's
battering
ships,

large army
and fleet.

The be-
siegers cal-
culate that
twenty-four
hours
would re-
duce Gib-
raltar.

ELLIOT, without precisely knowing what the inventions of the enemy were, had a general idea that their dispositions were both mighty and extraordinary, and with comprehensive wisdom and magnanimity prepared against every species of attack. Perceiving their works on the land side to be nearly completed, he determined to try how far a vigorous cannonade and bombardment with redhot balls, carcasses, and shells, might operate to their destruction. On the 8th of September, at seven in the morning, he commenced a firing so powerful, and so admirably

Elliot anti-
cipates
their
attack;

pours red-
hot balls on
their bat-
teries:

¹ Annual Register, 1782, p. 232.

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again de-
stroys their
prepara-
tions and
proves
their hopes
groundless.

directed, as to commit considerable devastation on the enemy's works. Enraged at this loss, the besiegers hurried on their grand attack. On the 13th of September, this tremendous operation commenced both by sea and land; the various parts being very skilfully adjusted, their batteries appeared to have prodigious effect; their battering ships, especially, so formidable for offence, during several hours seemed exquisitely adapted for defence, and invulnerable to the red-hot balls that were pouring from the garrison. The execution of these terrible instruments, though not instantaneous, was nevertheless effectual: about two o'clock, the admiral's ship was seen to issue smoke, at night she was in flames, and several others on fire; soon afterwards the conflagration was general over the battering ships, and the sole endeavours of the enemy were exerted in saving the men. The small naval force employed in the garrison of Gibraltar, was commanded by captain Curtis; that brave officer and his sailors had, in the preceding attacks from the garrison, performed very difficult and important services by land; now an opportunity occurred for exerting themselves on their own element. During the confusion and distress of the enemy hurrying from the burning battering ships, captain Curtis, with twelve gunboats, flanked their line, raked them on one side, whilst the garrison was destroying them from another. The Spanish boats durst no longer attempt to assist the battering ships; and, when daylight appeared, the assailants who had been stationed on those were seen perishing in the flames, or endeavouring to escape, overwhelmed by the opposite element. The British now seeing that they had completely destroyed those formidable batteries, with characteristic humanity endeavoured to rescue the remainder of their defenders; and captain Curtis and his gallant band, through great danger to themselves, saved the lives of about four hundred. Such was the signal and complete defensive victory obtained by a comparatively small handful of heroes, over the combined efforts and united powers by sea and land, of two great, warlike, and potent nations, who, sparing no expense nor exertion of art for the attainment of a favourite object, exceeded all former examples as well in the magnitude as the formidable nature of their

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They again attempt a blockade.

Lord Howe attempts to supply and relieve Gibraltar :

effects his purpose in the face of a much superior fleet.

He offers the enemy battle, which they decline.

preparations. The enemy being so totally disappointed in their sanguine expectations of taking this fortress by assault, now rested their sole hopes on the resumption of blockade, by preventing lord Howe from bringing the expected ammunition and provisions. They professed ardently to wish for the arrival of the British fleet, and assured themselves of compensating their direful disasters by brilliant victory. On the 9th of October a violent storm dispersed the combined armament, and exposed them to imminent danger. Lord Howe having been retarded by contrary winds, did not arrive at the straits until the 11th of October : during the night a considerable part of the fleet having missed the bay of Gibraltar, entered the Mediterranean, and the next day the admiral followed to assemble the scattered ships, having left the Buffalo of sixty guns to collect the storeships as they arrived in the bay, and also the Panther of the same force in the straits. On the 13th the combined fleet passed the straits with about forty-seven ships of the line, three of their men of war having been disabled by the tempest, and discovered lord Howe with thirty-two ships of the line off the coast of Grenada ; next morning, however, they were out of sight. The British admiral now sailing westward, sent his convoy safe into Gibraltar ; it contained a reinforcement of troops, with plentiful supplies of ammunition and provisions of every sort for the garrison. The enemy did not make their appearance until after this great object of the expedition was completely effected. On the 19th of October, when lord Howe, being joined by the Buffalo and Panther, was with thirty-four ships entering into the gut of Gibraltar, he descried the enemy sailing from the northeast towards the straits, with the wind blowing fair from the Mediterranean. He thought it would be extremely imprudent, with so inferior a force, to hazard an engagement in a dangerous road, well known to the enemy, but not to his fleet ; he therefore proceeded to the open ocean. On the 21st of October, he descried the enemy following him at about five leagues to windward, and immediately formed a line of battle. The enemy having the wind in their favour, had their choice both of the time of action and the distance from which they should engage. At sunset the combined

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General
purpose of
Bourbon
ambition
frustrated ;
Britain re-
tains the
sovereignty
of the sea.

The belli-
gerent
powers are
at length
convinced
that hostili-
ties are re-
ciprocally
ruinous.

fleets began a cannonade, which the British returned with such effect as to produce considerable damage and to throw their antagonists into evident confusion. The French and Spanish admirals drew off their ships about ten at night ; and in the morning they were seen at a great distance sailing away in the direction of Cadiz. Several considerations prevented lord Howe from pursuing the enemy ; he had effected the principal purpose of his command in relieving Gibraltar ; he had been ordered to despatch eight of his ships, after the relief of the garrison, to the West Indies : the force of the enemy was so superior as to render the issue of a battle extremely doubtful ; and even if he should succeed, he was to expect his ships to be so much damaged as to disable them from proceeding to the other destined services. Lord Howe was too wise to fight merely for the sake of battle, and to incur certain danger without any definite object. He therefore proceeded to England, where, after having on his way detached part of his fleet to the West Indies, he arrived in safety with the rest. Thus in the protection of her coasts and trade, preventing the junction of the Dutch with the Bourbon fleets, and the relief of Gibraltar, Britain effected the three great objects of the campaign 1782 in Europe. In the East and West Indies the schemes of our enemies had, as we have seen, proved equally abortive. A confederacy extending from the north sea to the Mediterranean, containing the three greatest naval states and almost all the maritime force of continental Europe, found their mighty efforts against the navy of England recoil on themselves.

THE various contending parties at length began to see, that whatever partial advantages might be gained, the contest in which they were engaged tended to the general injury of all the belligerent powers. France had succeeded in separating the American colonies from Britain ; but had been foiled in her principal purpose of obtaining naval and commercial supremacy. Her operations had been carried on at an enormous expense, which not only annihilated all the recent savings of her reforming economist, but infinitely exceeded her revenue, and overwhelmed her with new debt. The war which caused such unprece-

dented expenditure, had been far from producing any advantage likely to secure an eventual equivalent: her expectations of compensating present embarrassment, were becoming daily more hopeless. The confederacy in India was crumbling to pieces, and British superiority was again manifest: all her sanguine projects against the West Indies had fallen under the victorious arms of Rodney; and America impoverished by her long and arduous struggle, was more likely to drain than to supply the treasure of her allies. Spain had engaged in the war as the tool of French ambition, which artfully playing on the weakness, personal prejudices, and vanity of the prince, dazzled him by splendid promises of Gibraltar and Jamaica, and thereby blinded him to his real interests, to which nothing could be more contrary than either the encouragement of revolt in American colonies, or hostilities with England. All her mighty and costly preparations against Gibraltar had fallen under Elliot's red-hot balls. From Rodney her schemes against Jamaica received a decisive defeat, her hopes of naval and commercial aggrandizement through the depression of England had perished, her ships had been captured and her fleets overthrown. In four years, all her extraordinary exertions, all her waste of blood and treasure had conquered a defenceless province,^m and captured an hospital.ⁿ America had succeeded in the contest, and attained the objects for which she fought; but she prevailed by efforts which drained her resources, by labours that required a respite as soon as it could be procured consistently with her public engagements. During her short warfare, Holland in the loss of her settlements, the seizure of her treasures, and the destruction of her trade, learned how dangerous it is for a state deriving its subsistence from commerce to provoke to war a neighbour that rules the ocean. Britain for the last five years had been engaged in a war to defend her maritime sovereignty; great as had been her collateral losses, she had on the whole maintained that grand object; but her defence, though manifesting her energy, had drained her resources; her expenditure was enormous, her debts and taxes had

^m West Florida.ⁿ Minorca.

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far exceeded the anticipation of even her most desponding politicians ; trade was interrupted, difficulties and distress poignant and alarming ; increasing demands, appeared to portend the derangement of her finances, and the downfall of her credit. From all these circumstances it was the interest of each party separately, and all jointly, to conciliate peace.

Overtures
for a gen-
eral peace.

THE determination lately avowed by England to acknowledge the independence of America, removed the most ostensive obstacle to an accommodation, as the discomfiture of their designs dispelled the real objections of our European enemies. The empress of Russia and emperor of Germany, finding a pacificatory disposition in the belligerent powers, and that circumstances now admitted of its being carried into effect, offered themselves and were accepted as mediators. Soon after lord Shelburne became prime minister, the British government had sent Mr. William Windham Grenville, brother to the earl of Temple, to Paris, to pave the way for opening a negotiation in the proper form. These preliminaries being settled, Mr. Fitzherbert, envoy at Brussels, was appointed plenipotentiary to negotiate and conclude a peace with the ministers of France, Spain and Holland. He accordingly proceeded to Paris in the beginning of November ; Mr. Oswald, a merchant, was likewise despatched to the French metropolis as commissioner from his Britannic majesty, for treating of peace with John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the commissioners nominated for the same purpose on the part of the United States of America. On the 30th of November, provisional articles were signed as the grounds of future peace : by this treaty, the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the thirteen United States was individually by name, and in the fullest and most express terms acknowledged, and every claim to their government, property, and territorial rights for ever relinquished by the crown of Britain. To prevent all future disputes about boundaries, several lines were drawn, which it is unnecessary to follow with geographical minuteness ; it is sufficient to say that Britain retained Canada and Nova Scotia ; and acknowledged all the territory southwards to Georgia inclusive, westward to

The pre-
liminary
articles are
signed.

The inde-
pendence
of America
is acknow-
ledged.

the Ohio and Mississippi, and eastwards to the Atlantic ocean to be independent : to the United States, so defined, she granted an unlimited right of fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, in the gulf of St. Lawrence, and all other places where both nations had heretofore been accustomed to fish. American creditors were to recover fair debts in sterling money : congress engaged to recommend to the legislators to restore all estates, rights, and properties, belonging to real British subjects, which had been confiscated ; also of other loyalists who had not borne arms against the United States, and to treat with mildness all descriptions of loyalists. Congress farther engaged, that after the conclusion of the treaty, there should be no future confiscations, or prosecutions for having joined the British.

By the treaty with France, England extended the privilege of the French to fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and likewise ceded the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in full right to France, and consequently without any restriction in point of fortification. In the West Indies, England restored to France the island of St. Lucie ; and ceded and guaranteed to her the island of Tobago. On the other hand, France restored to Britain, the island of Grenada, and the Grenadines, with St. Vincents, Dominica, St. Christophers, Nevis, and Montserrat. In Africa, England ceded to France the river of Senegal, with the forts and dependencies ; and also the island of Goree. France guaranteed to England the river Gambia, and fort St. James. In India, England restored her acquisitions during the war ; in return for which France, having made no conquest, could not give an equivalent in that country, and none was required in any other. In Europe, England agreed to the abrogation and suppression of all the articles relative to Dunkirk, from the treaty of peace concluded at Utrecht, in 1713, inclusively to the present time.

Treaties
between
Britain and
the respec-
tive pow-
ers.

By the treaty with Spain, Great Britain ceded not only Minorca and West Florida, but also East Florida ; and Spain on her part restored to Britain the Bahama Islands. The preliminaries between Britain and Holland were not immediately signed, but until these should be adjusted a suspension of arms was established. It was afterwards

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agreed that, with regard to the honours of the flag, the same custom should be respectively followed as was practised before the war; the captured ships from each nation should be restored; and there should be a general restoration of all places taken, except Negapatam, which was to continue in possession of his Britannic majesty, until the Dutch should offer an equivalent. The Dutch engaged not to obstruct the navigation of British subjects on the eastern seas; and whereas disputes had risen between the African companies of the respective nations, it was agreed these should be referred to commissioners.

1783.

THE preliminaries between Britain, France, and America, were signed on or before the 21st of January 1783; and as an armistice soon after followed by a treaty of peace, was at the same time established between Britain and Holland, we may from this time consider the war as finished.

General
view of this
arduous
contest.

THUS ended the American war; in which all the nations that contended, however potent their exertions or brilliant their several successes, yet were very great sufferers by the events. The American colonies, indeed, so far succeeded in their object as to render themselves an independent and separate community. The real advantage to accrue from this dismemberment was problematical and contingent; to depend upon not only physical and moral causes, of which the operation and effect might be doubtful, but on a variety of circumstances and incidents which could not possibly be foreseen. One fact they could experimentally ascertain; their revolutionary efforts had impoverished, devastated, and unpeopled the country. This was a notorious and glaring evil, present, seen, and felt, the good was doubtful, and hitherto to be found only in anticipating imagination. Waving the question of abstract right, and considering only expediency, concerning the resistance of the Americans situated as they had been relatively to the mother country; policy and prudence could justify their repugnance to the acts of the British government, only on the supposition that these tended to change their former happy situation, and to deprive them of their rights as freemen and British subjects. In this case, refusal to comply would not be a measure of choice,

but to generous and magnanimous minds a dictate of necessity. There not only might be, but were many who conceived the Americans driven to hostilities at first, yet censured the unaccommodating spirit which refused the proffers of returning amity ; and lamented the separation between children of the same origin. Britain was a greater loser by this contest than by any in which she had ever been engaged : thirteen provinces, before the unhappy dispute rapidly increasing not only their own prosperity, but the individual and national wealth, the defensive and offensive force of the parent state, were severed from it for ever. Through her quarrel with America, Britain had been involved in a complication of the most expensive and formidable wars ; and a few years, nearly doubling her burdens, almost equalled the cost of a century. So far were these enormous sums from being expended in the reasonable hope of future indemnification, that they were a sacrifice of a great part of the public capital to preserve the existence of the nation. Heretofore Britain had fought for victory, now she contended for bare life ; but all her dangers, difficulties and distresses from the European confederacy had their origin in the contest with the American colonies ; and here impartial history, without either impugning or supporting the alleged right of the Americans to tax themselves, justifying or condemning the policy of the principle and mode of asserting that right, must exhibit one general series of facts, tending to impeach the wisdom of British counsels ; *every coercive measure, from the stamp act downwards, produced a directly contrary effect to that which its abettors sought and proposed.* The only soothing and conciliatory schemes adopted before the rupture, the plans of the marquis of Rockingham and lord North, in 1766 and 1770, in a great degree removed the evils which projects of imperious exaction had generated through most of the colonies ; they restored the harmony which imperious dictation had disturbed ; and the repeal of imposts reproduced that revenue which attempted taxation destroyed. Thus experience the most recent afforded strong reasons to conclude, that, to preserve the attachment of America, and profit by her industry, prosperity, and riches, the imposition of taxes

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must be laid aside. Strong, and general, and uniform, as the colonial expression of repugnance to taxation had been, and was, the British ministers conceived a notion that it was confined to the influence of a few factious demagogues :^o such reports indeed they received from their own partial and interested adherents ; on these they acted in the face of the plainest evidence of universal association ; which to abhorrence of British taxation sacrificed every predilection of taste and habit for British commodities ; and manifested individual, corporate and confederate reprobation, both in word and deed, of pecuniary contribution without their own consent. Ministers still thought that the majority of the colonies was favourable to British impost. And here it must be admitted, that the abettors of the project as a scheme of beneficial policy, with the means of being thoroughly informed, were really ignorant of the state of the case concerning which they professed to reason and to plan. Originating in misapprehension, their conclusions were false, and their measures unwise and pernicious. The most partial admirers of lord North's administration would find it impossible to prove, or even plausibly to contend, that his schemes respecting America were founded in adequate knowledge, just deduction, or wise policy. But his enemies on the other hand must allow, though the propositions might be his, the enactment belonged to the whole legislature. The same imperfect information that marked the senatorial motions of ministers affected also their executorial plans and directions. In addition to their favourite theory of the general attachment of the Americans to British supremacy, they adopted another hypothesis, that the colonists were cowards. On this speculation they formed their military arrangements, and to repress hostile resistance sent a very inadequate force. Their tardy projects of partial conciliation, and retained coercion, encouraged colonial confidence, without removing disaffection and resentment.

WHEN war was inevitable, or at least could be avoided but by such concessions only as they deemed it incom-

^o See vol. i. *passim*.

patible with honour and duty to grant, its management became the object of consideration. Here the censure bestowed upon ministry so lavishly, after the first campaign, admits considerable modifications. The armies sent, and generals employed, afforded a moral probability of success. Sir William Howe was a man of high military character; nor was it possible for government to select an officer from whom all ranks and parties could entertain more sanguine expectations. The troops in number, kind, and strength, were such as any statesman, reasoning from general principles and experience, compared with the hostile force, might very fairly infer to be adequate to the purpose. If the event of Howe's command proved very different, the detailed narrative must have shown that it arose from causes not all chargeable on ministers. The substitution of Burgoyne in the place of Carleton, was a preference which had no foundation in their respective military characters. Whatever Burgoyne's talents might be, Carleton's opportunities of exertion, especially in that country, had been greater, and were crowned with success. The disasters of Burgoyne may certainly be charged, in a considerable degree, to the American minister, whether the failure was in the plan or the execution. Indeed the design of penetrating into Albany appeared to arise from a very general source of miscarriage in all the British schemes respecting America,---unfounded hopes of loyal cooperation. On the return of sir William Howe, the appointment of sir Henry Clinton was a measure that appeared fair and reasonable according to the usual course of military promotion. His character as an officer was unobjectionable, and he had been second in command. He was brave, perfectly acquainted with the details of tactical evolution, and the routine of military duty. How far he had genius adequate to the great and comprehensive schemes, rapid invention, and energetic operation, requisite in a commander in chief on a momentous service, may be fairly questioned. He certainly, on a very important occasion,^p manifested a want of that sagacity which penetrating the

^p See this vol. p. 381.

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design of an antagonist, can anticipate and disconcert his plans, and baffle his efforts. Though prescription might point to Clinton as a successor to Howe, reason would have conferred the command upon lord Cornwallis. When war commenced with the house of Bourbon, the primary object of Britain was her navy. The conduct of this department, though branded by opposition with every reproachful epithet, whether considered in particular detail, or general result, appears not to deserve such unqualified censure. The great and broad fact is, the house of Bourbon directed their chief efforts to naval operations, and were joined both by recent subjects and former allies of Britain; yet all this confederated force could obtain no superiority over the navy of England. The fleet first furnished against France, equal in number, and consequently, according to the estimate of uniform experience, a match for the enemy, and the commander employed high in professional reputation, afforded well grounded expectations of success. The disappointment which ensued could not be imputed to the want of a sufficiently powerful force. The escape of the French armament probably brought on the Spanish, and afterwards the Dutch war; and though in some particular instances trade might have been better protected, and certain warlike operations might have been more seasonably conducted, yet in general the commanders employed, and the armaments equipped, were adequate to the purposes of defence and protection, which against such an host of foes, was nearly the whole that could be expected.

IN the conduct of the war, neither military or naval plans, operations, or results, were so deserving of blame or regret, as the enormous profusion of the public money. If indeed we compare the expense, not with result of operations, but with the true measure, the means required and exerted, the end sought and attained, we find the excess of public money expended beyond public service done, to have been so enormous, as to afford probable grounds of suspecting, that the minister employed corrupt donative to purchase that parliamentary influence which he could not command by his abilities. Great however as were the burdens entailed upon Britain by the Ameri-

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can war, the efforts which she exhibited when urged by necessity, manifested the extent and depth of her resources, the ability, skill, and valour of her national defenders, and the force of her national character. The American war, in its origin, was unwise; in its conduct of a very mixed character; in its progress, frequently disastrous; in its result, injurious, but not dishonourable. The struggles to ward off calamity, the exertions to defend independence, manifested qualities, which, under wise direction and more invigorating energy, were fitted and destined not only to restore the national power and splendour, but to extend it far beyond the most glorious experience.

Our resistance to such a confederation manifested the immense resources of Britain, her lofty genius and invincible spirit.

HOLLAND, misled by a French faction to provoke war with a view of increasing her commerce, far from succeeding in her object, was deprived both of her actual trade, and a great portion of its former gains. When, according to her mercantile character, she struck a balance, she found the whole war account to be loss.

Folly of naval states provoking to hostilities the mistress of the ocean.

SPAIN, in the midst of silver and gold, poor, because void of industry, with every natural advantage of situation, soil, and climate, and the adventitious profits from her colonial possessions, being in that condition of dependence on her inventive and energetic neighbour, which indolence, listlessness, and inaction, in nations as well as individuals, must yield to ingenuity, activity, and enterprise; was by the war loaded with debts, to her overwhelming, because she had not in her character and spirit the means of extrication.

BUT the most momentous evils of the American war have been experienced by France. That great and powerful nation has ever been a sufferer by wars with England: whatever special causes may have at different periods embroiled the two mightiest states of modern history, in the union of resources and character; the general principle on the side of the French has been maritime and commercial competition. In every one of these wars she has been disappointed, her existing navy and commerce impaired, and her naval and commercial resources diminished; the exertions intended to injure Britain failed: whereas, equal efforts of that ability and energy

Consequences proximate and eventual to the respective parties.

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which she possesses in so eminent a degree, if employed in the peaceable improvement of her various resources, without wasteful expenditure, would have produced the commerce and opulence which she in vain sought by burdensome and ruinous wars. When at peace with England, she has flourished ; when attempting by war to achieve maritime superiority, she was discomfited, and not only expended the treasure of past peaceful industry, but anticipated future gains. Experience might have taught her, that the attempt to be the first in naval power could never be successful. Reflection might have convinced her, that without maritime supremacy, she, from her situation and character, might possess such an extent of commerce as would fully employ that department of national industry, and a sufficient naval force to protect it against the whole world, if she did not interfere with England. If she were susceptible of instruction from the lessons of experience, never could the hopelessness of seeking naval supremacy be more strongly impressed on her than by the American war. Never had Britain fought with so many disadvantages and impediments, yet she had retained the empire of the sea. The history, both of Spain and her own country, might have taught France the certain loss accruing to the maritime states from a contest with England. Provoking the naval efforts of this kingdom, Philip wasted much of that strength which had descended to his dominions from Charles V. and left his successors an easy prey to the efforts of France, who was then at peace with England, and exerted her forces where she was prepollent. Lewis XIV. had rendered himself dictator of Europe, until he ventured a naval contest with England. La Hogue avenged Rocroi and the Downs : the victories of Condé and Turenne paved the way to Lewis for governing the christian world by his armies, if his fleets had avoided an encounter with Russel. As a naval war had always been injurious to France, her extraordinary efforts in that which was just ended exhausted her treasury, and deranged her finances much more than was immediately suspected ; but fiscal embarrassments, great as they were, proved eventually only instrumental to much more formidable evils which

accrued to France from the part that she acted in the American war. The principles which intercourse with American republicanism nourished, were much more mischievous to the French monarchy, than all the expenses and losses which she had incurred; and cooperating with doctrines before industriously spread, had a powerful efficacy in overturning the established constitution. The fall of the French monarchy, aristocracy, and hierarchy, if not caused was rapidly accelerated by the American war.

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Administration of lord Shelburne—deficient in strength.—State of political parties.—Meeting of parliament.—Unusual length and particularity of his majesty's speech.—Mr. Fox details the reasons of his own resignation.—His party and lord North's concur in censuring ministers—their attacks indicate a concert of counsels—both reprobate the peace.—Ministers defend the peace as necessary in the exhausted state of our navy, army, and finances—and the terms the best that could be attained.—Famous coalition of lord North and Mr. Fox.—The coalition considered relatively to its leaders.—Vote of censure passed against ministers.—Great clamour against the coalition.—Ministers resign.—Ministerial interregnum.—The coalition come into office.—Duke of Portland first lord of the treasury.—Lord North and Mr. Fox secretaries of state.—Revival of commerce with America.—Mr. William Pitt proposes a specific plan of parliamentary reform.—Motion of the duke of Richmond respecting the great seal—combated by lord Loughborough.—Minute economical regulations.—George, prince of Wales—abilities and opening character—a separate establishment appointed for his highness.—India affairs—committee continues its investigations.—From the mass of evidence Mr. Dundas exhibits a comprehensive statement of the situation of affairs, and of executorial conduct—proposes a bill for the regulation of British India—for the present postpones his plan.—Indian affairs first displayed the force and extent of Mr. Dundas's talents—which were before but partially known and comprehended.—Supplies.—New taxes.—Internal state of Britain at the peace.—Continental occurrences.

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FROM the resignation of Mr. Fox and the adherents of the marquis of Rockingham, the classes which, though differing in certain opinions, had coincided

in opposition to lord North's ministry, were now conceived to have become inimical parties. Lord Shelburne, the prime minister, was a man of considerable political knowledge, and particularly distinguished for his minute and detailed acquaintance with foreign affairs. He was however, more noted for extent and exactness of intelligence, than for the formation of able and beneficial plans from the result. He was therefore, perhaps, less fitted for the supreme management in so trying and critical a situation, than for some secondary department, in which, from his abundant stores, he might have supplied materials for the operation of more energetic and less experienced genius. In that view had he continued a member of the cabinet of which Mr. Fox was really the head, there is little doubt Britain would have possessed a ministry that, whatever its character might have been in other respects, at least would not have failed in efficacy. Lord Shelburne had attached himself to the illustrious Chatham, and after his decease was considered as the leader of his friends and connexions, but did not greatly increase the number by his own personal influence. Far from overbearing party by genius like Chatham, he was not like many other ministers propped up by a confederacy. Lord Camden, lord Temple, and Mr. Dunning (now lord Ashburton), joined rather than followed Shelburne ; lord Thurlow and Mr. Dundas took the same side, but to support government, more than from any approbation of its present chief minister. Mr. Dundas indeed had taken a grand and comprehensive view both of the country and political characters ; reduced to distress by the timidity and weakness of mature years, Britain he conceived must seek restoration from youthful wisdom. He very early supposed Mr. Pitt to be the man who must save his country as prime minister : Mr. Pitt himself was officially joined with lord Shelburne, but appears to have attended to the duties of his own department without entering into party projects and intrigues. Neither the number of those who supported the minister, nor the motives by which some of them were actuated, afforded a probability of permanency to lord Shelburne's administration. There were two other parties, both powerful and well compacted. The

is deficient
in strength.

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political
parties.

benevolent disposition and social qualities, the brilliant wit, pleasing humour, and engaging manners of lord North, had cooperated with political motives in attaching great numbers to his person and interests. No man had exerted himself more uniformly and effectually to serve his friends, and though not from all, he from many experienced that gratitude which was so pleasing to his benignant and affectionate heart. His party no longer possessed the masculine force of Thurlow, the close, powerful, and direct efforts of Dundas ; nevertheless in lords Stormont and Carlisle, lord Loughborough and lord Mansfield, Messrs. Courtney, Anstruther, Adam and Eden, and lord North himself, besides many others of respectable talents, he retained a formidable host of political strength. A less numerous, but still stronger and better compacted body, was that which the philosophic genius of Burke guided and instructed, the rapid and powerful energy of Fox invigorated and led : here shone deliberative and judicial eloquence in their most brilliant lustre ; here even Messrs. Erskine and Sheridan acted only second parts. There was besides this constellation of talent, the weight and interest of the whig aristocracy. Lord Shelburne was conscious that, without some accession of political strength, he would be incapable of retaining his situation, and despaired of a reunion with those from whom he had so lately separated ; he therefore made overtures to the party which he had uniformly opposed. Mr. Pitt candidly bestowed a just tribute of praise on lord North, but declared his determination never to be a member of a ministry in which that statesman should bear a part. It may indeed be fairly inferred from the conduct of Mr. Pitt, that he thought it wiser to stand upon political talents and character, than to seek the props of coalitions and combinations. The intrinsic strength of lord Shelburne, however, was not so great as to preclude the necessity of extrinsic aid ; the application therefore in him was commensurate in prudence with the desire of continuance in office, but it proved unavailing. Various reports were now spread concerning the intentions of both the respective parties and individual members, and all eyes were turned to the approaching meeting of parlia-

ment, wherein it was expected that the several objects and designs would be unfolded.

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On the 5th of December 1782, his majesty opened the session in a speech of very great length, and comprehending an unusual extent, variety, and particularity of political disquisition. The introduction stated, that since the close of the last session, his majesty had been constantly employed in the care and attention which the important and critical conjuncture of affairs required; he had put an end to the prosecution of offensive war in America, and had entered into provisional articles for declaring the colonies independent. "In thus, (his majesty said) admitting their separation from the crown of these kingdoms, I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinion of my people. I make it my humble and earnest prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the evils which might result from so great a dismemberment of the empire, and that America may be free from those calamities which have formerly proved, in the mother country, how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty." He went over the principal operations of the campaign, and bestowed the merited praise on the defence of Gibraltar, and other glorious and beneficial efforts. He mentioned the advanced state of the negotiations for peace, at the same time the necessity of being prepared, lest from any unforeseen cause they might be frustrated. To the house of commons he particularized a variety of economical regulations in the expenditure of the army and the civil list, and other reductions: and recommended to parliament an attention to the price of corn, that year unusually high. He extolled the liberality with which the rights and commerce of Ireland had been established, and advised a revision of our whole trading system upon the same comprehensive principles; and lastly, urged some fundamental regulations of our Asiatic territories. Though no opposition was made to the address in either house, yet severe animadversions were passed upon the speech in both. The recognition of American independence was censured upon two very opposite grounds. By the supporters of lord North it was severely condemned as having done much more than was necessary; and by Mr. Fox's

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ty of the
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Mr. Fox
details the
reasons of
his late re-
signation :

party, as not having done enough. Lord Stormont reprobated an unqualified surrender of the whole, without obtaining a truce, or even a cessation of hostilities, as the price of so lavish a concession. In the most abject and unfortunate reign that Spain ever knew (that of Philip III.), the negotiators of that prince retained ten out of seventeen of the revolted provinces, and detached the rest from their alliance with France ; yet by Britain the whole had been conceded, without any attempt to procure more favourable terms. Mr. Fox censured ministers for having made the independence of America conditionally to depend on a conclusion of a peace with France, instead of being absolute. A dispute on this subject, he informed the house, was one of the reasons which had compelled him to resign his late office. It had been uniformly his opinion, that the unconditional recognition of independence was the interest of Britain, because such an acknowledgment would dispose America to end the war as speedily as possible, and would tend essentially to accelerate a general peace. Finding himself outvoted in the cabinet on this question, he had thought it his duty to quit his situation. Mr. Fox's explanation of his reasons for retiring from office were by no means satisfactory to the public : it was not considered the part of a patriot to withdraw himself from the service of his country, merely because a measure proposed by him was not adopted ; it was conceived, that his extraordinary abilities, employed in the cabinet, might have rendered essential service to his country, whether the recognition of American independence were conditional or absolute. The real motives of his conduct were very generally construed to be dissatisfaction with the appointment of lord Shelburne to that office which he wished to be held by a distinguished member of the whig party.

UNTIL the recess, the attention of both houses was chiefly employed in motions for the production of papers respecting the negotiation, which were negatived on the ground of being premature until the treaty should be brought to a close.

PARLIAMENT met after the christmas holidays, on the 21st of January 1783 : the preliminary articles of peace between Great Britain and France having been signed at

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his party
and lord
North's
concur in
censuring
ministers;
their
attacks in-
dicate a
concert of
counsels:

both repro-
bate the
peace.

Ministers
defend the
peace as
necessary
in the state
of the
army,
navy, and
finances;

Versailles, were laid before legislature on the 27th of January, and the 17th of February was appointed for taking them into consideration. Lord North and Mr. Fox had both very frequently censured administration: their animadversions had arisen from professedly different principles: there had been no appearance of concert either in their attacks upon ministers or any other measures. The discussion of the peace manifested a systematic regularity of procedure, a selection of parts in the debate, and a concurrence of principles of reasoning and of particular arguments, which were too striking to be the result of accident, and obviously intimating a concert between two parties so long totally inimical to each other. Mr. Thomas Pitt moved an address to his majesty, expressing a high approbation of the peace. Lord John Cavendish, as speaker for the whig party, proposed an amendment, which should contain no opinion on the merit of the peace, but declare their resolution to bestow on it that serious and full attention which the importance of the subject deserved; but pledge themselves, whatever conclusion they might draw from the investigation of the terms, that they should invariably adhere to the articles which his majesty had stipulated. Lord North moved a second amendment, expressive of the regard due from the nation to the loyalists who had suffered so much in supporting the cause of Great Britain. The ministerial speakers defended the peace; first, as necessary in the circumstances of the country; and, secondly, as favourable in point of terms. Our finances, our navy, and our army, they contended, were in so deplorable a state as to render the continuance of the war ruinous. To maintain this position respecting pecuniary resources, they entered into a detailed account of incumbrances and expenditure. The national debt, funded and unfunded, amounted to upwards of two hundred and fifty millions. The annual interest, together with the necessary expense of a peace establishment, was fully equal to all the revenue which the people, groaning already under the load of taxes, could afford. Our navy, so far from being adequate to the purposes of offensive competition with the combined fleets of Europe, was scarcely sufficient for effectual defence. Our fleet did not exceed a hundred sail of the line, while the armaments of

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and the
terms the
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obtained.

France, Spain, and Holland, amounted to a hundred and seventy sail of the line. By continuing merely defensive war we could gain nothing, and consequently could not expect by another campaign to obtain a better peace. The army was still more inferior to the armies of our enemies, and totally inadequate to farther contest. These general positions they illustrated by a detailed account of our force in various parts of the world. Our most brilliant successes had been merely defensive, and only enabled us to retard the progress of the enemy. From this view of total inability to engage in another campaign with a prospect of bringing it to a more favourable conclusion, it was argued, that peace, on any terms, would break the powerful confederacy, and give us time to recruit our wasted strength; and therefore was preferable to a continuance of the war. But it was further contended, that the conditions of the peace were advantageous. One of the chief objections to the treaty was the participation allowed the French in the Newfoundland fishery; but this, called by opposition a cession, was by ministers argued to be only the definition and limitation of a right which always had been exercised by France, and formerly, from being indefinite, was the source of perpetual contention. The space to which France was now limited, was very inconsiderable both in extent and productiveness in comparison of the coast which Britain possessed. The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, ceded to France, were only a restitution of what had belonged to her before the preceding war; and so far were these places from admitting fortifications that could annoy our fishery in a future war, the most skilful engineers had certified, that neither island would admit the construction of a fortress which could stand the attack of the smallest of our frigates. During the detail of the various cessions in the West, Africa, and the East Indies, they endeavoured to prove that they were really of little importance. The articles of the treaty of Utrecht, respecting Dunkirk, had never been enforced, and were not now designed to be executed: their abrogation therefore could not be detrimental to England. France desired their suppression as a point of honour; and by compliance we gratified the other party, without incurring any loss ourselves. East

and West Florida and Minorca, which were now yielded to Spain, had already cost this country much more than they brought, and were besides balanced by the restitution of the Bahama islands and Providence. The article most strongly censured was, the terms procured for the loyalists. In answer to those, it was said, that congress was invested with no power over the property of the several states: a recommendation to the provincial assemblies was all which their constitutional authority permitted them to undertake; but whatever weight could be justly allowed to any of the objections against the concessions, the supporters of the peace contended, that either severally or jointly, they were of no moment when balanced with the evils of continuing the war. Having endeavoured to defend the peace, both on the grounds of general expediency and particular conditions, they next proceeded to the motives of their opponents; they asserted, that an union of professed tories and professed whigs, who for so many years had been abusing and reviling each other, must arise from some different reason than mutual agreement of political opinion. The following was the account which they gave of this unexpected confederation: lord North's party had long experienced the advantages of office, but at the same time had been exposed to the forcible attacks of Mr. Fox, and the whig confederacy of which he had become a member; they now sought to regain the benefits without suffering the annoyance; Mr. Fox and his coadjutors conceived that their favourite plan of governing by a combination was more certainly practicable by extending its objects; and both parties found it expedient to sacrifice all animosity and professed reprobation to reciprocal interest; the peace was merely a pretext for joining the parties, in order to force their way into administration. The event so far justified this interpretation, that the new confederacy outvoted ministers, and the amendments were carried in the house of commons by a considerable majority.

WHEN this coalition was reported abroad, it was first received with a mixture of doubt and astonishment. Many of the sanguine admirers of Mr. Fox, who had been accustomed to receive his orations, not merely as effusions of genius, but as oracles of truth, conceived lord North to

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coalition of
lord North
and Mr.
Fox.

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The coalition considered relatively to its leaders and subjects.

be as bad, as malignant, and diabolical, as Mr. Fox, in the rapidity of invention, prompted by passion, and borne away by fancy, chose to represent his antagonist. These could not at first believe that he associated with a man whom he taught them to consider as a weak and wicked minister; but when they found that a coalition had taken place, they turned, against the late object of their idolatry, a resentment proportioned to their recent adoration. Discerning and impartial men, estimating the merits of a coalition in such circumstances, laid little stress on the violent expressions which, in the paroxysms of impassioned eloquence, Mr. Fox had employed; but they examined the history of his planned and deliberative proceedings. The principal points of difference between lord North and Mr. Fox were not speculative opinions, but practical conduct. He had for a series of years declared the measures and policy of lord North to be such as to demonstrate incapacity, corruption, profligacy, and every quality in a minister that was ruinous to the country over which he presided. He had not confined himself to imputation of folly and weakness, but had alleged the highest criminality. With lord North, whom, in 1782, he had declared, deserving of death for the wickedness of his administration, Mr. Fox, in 1783, declared himself ready to cooperate in administration. If Mr. Fox represented lord North as the weakest and blackest of men, believing him to be otherwise, what confidence was to be reposed in any of his future declarations? If he before believed him to be so bad as he represented, what had happened in that short time to change his opinion? What had lord North done when out of office to approve himself to Mr. Fox fit for being minister, when, in office, declared by him to be fit only for the block? These were questions which impartial men naturally asked, in order to determine how far it was proper to receive the professions of Mr. Fox. Equal blame was by no means attached to lord North; he had never declared any opinion against the political talents or character of Mr. Fox. There was, therefore, no inconsistency in coalescing with him as a statesman, provided the objects to be sought, and the means to be employed by that combination, were meritorious; and

these soon appeared, though not in their full extent. A very short time manifested the intention of the coalition to be, through their paramount influence in the house of commons, to dictate to his majesty the choice of ministers, which is left by the constitution of the country to his own discretion. This purpose was much more incompatible with the long professed principles of lord North, than with the recent principles and doctrines of Mr. Fox. Indeed, lord North and Mr. Fox, able as they were by nature, and conversant from experience and situation in the politics of the country, appeared to have considered the constitution partially rather than completely. They could neither be said to be supporters of the whole system, nor of the balances on which its perfection depends. Lord North was a partisan of the monarchical, and Mr. Fox of the popular, department. The former, however, now joined with the latter in extending the power of the commons, by reducing the power of the crown. Thus a coalition with lord North, FOR ANY PURPOSE TO BE EFFECTED BY POLITICAL ABILITIES AND INTEGRITY, was totally inconsistent with the very often repeated professions of Mr. Fox. *This specific object* of the coalition was no less incompatible with the uniformly declared principles of lord North. Mr. Fox could not, consistently, coalesce with lord North as a statesman; lord North could not, consistently, coalesce with any man to reduce the kingly prerogative.

HAVING rejected the motion for approving the peace, the coalition party next proceeded to a positive censure. On the 21st of February, it was moved, that the concessions granted by the peace to the enemies of Britain, were greater than either the actual situation of their respective possessions, or their comparative strength, entitled them to receive. In support of this proposition they followed the order of their adversaries, and endeavoured to prove by detailed accounts, that the finances, the army, and navy, were not in the reduced state alleged by ministers; that the cessions were much more important than they pretended; and also, that they might have been prevented. In speaking on our financial situation, Mr. Fox, with great force and effect, exposed the absurdity of economists

The coalition controverts the arguments of ministers in favour of the peace.

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views of
Fox on
public cre-
dit.

The com-
mons pass
a vote of
censure on
ministers.

Ministers
resign.

supposing specific limits to our national credit. "Speculative politicians (he said) have in all times been fond of circumscribing the bounds of public credit, and drawing a line beyond which they imagine it cannot be stretched; but repeated experience has shown, that such ideas are, for the most part, imaginary and chimerical. National credit is relative to the result of private and public ability and industry. It is impossible, therefore, to fix the line beyond which it cannot extend, without, at the same time, marking the bounds of that ability and industry." The navy Mr. Fox declared to be in a flourishing state, and to have been competent in the late campaign to every purpose of offence and defence. It was, however, the same that had been equipped under lord Sandwich; and for the ruinous state of which this orator had attacked the first lord of the admiralty, the year before, with such bitter severity. His general arguments against the present ministry proceeded on an assumption, that our resources were in a flourishing state: we certainly were neither richer nor stronger within the last ten months; his reasoning, therefore, contained a virtual admission, that his charges against the former ministry of having utterly ruined the country, were totally unfounded. Mr. Fox displayed skillful dexterity in his defence of the coalition: he kept aloof from the principles and objects of the present combination, and exerted his eloquence in impressing a general position, that union between individuals and parties formerly inimical, was often meritorious; and that such junctions frequently had been effected in this country, to the very great advantage of the nation. Impartial observers saw that the obvious truth of this general assertion proved nothing respecting the merit or demerit of this particular coalition. The question being called for, the motion for censuring ministry was carried in the affirmative, by a majority of two hundred and twenty-four to two hundred and eight. In the house of lords, a similar proposition was negatived.

In consequence of the censure of the commons, lord Shelburne resigned his office. The chancellor of the exchequer declared publicly in the house that he only held his place until a successor should be appointed. During

the whole month of March there was a ministerial interregnum: the reasons which the one side alleged for this delay were the mutual jealousy that still subsisted between the coalesced parties, and the difficulties which they found in adjusting their several pretensions; others asserted that the court wished to retain the abilities of the lord chancellor, and that Mr. Fox's party insisted on the exclusion of that illustrious character. The adherents of the coalition professed to think that the sovereign was endeavouring to use his own prerogative, by forming a ministry without regard to the newly established connexion. During this time the kingdom was without any responsible government; with the finances neglected, the military establishments un-reduced, and the negotiations with foreign powers, which the critical conjuncture of affairs rendered peculiarly important, entirely at a stand. During this interval, various inquiries were made in the house concerning pensions, which had been recently granted. On discussing the particulars, however, the coalition members found that no plausible objections could be maintained to the several grants of the late ministers. Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, gave notice that he meant in the course of the following week to move an address to his majesty to urge the formation of a new ministry. The king ordered the duke of Portland and lord North to lay before him a sketch of their proposed arrangements; but nothing conclusive having been determined, Mr. Coke, on the 24th, made the promised motion, in the discussion of which there was a considerable degree of personal invective. The opposite party, comprehending several independent country gentlemen, attacked the coalition. One gentleman proposed to add to the address the exclusion of all those who had been comprised in Mr. Fox's motion in the former year, declaring the incapacity of his present associates; "that his majesty should please not
 "to nominate or appoint any person or persons to fill up
 "the vacant departments, *who by their mismanagement*
 "*of public affairs, and want of foresight and abilities,*
 "*when they were in office, had lost the confidence of the*

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"people."^q The coalition retorted these sarcastic attacks, by repeating the vote of censure on the late ministry; they also revived the charges against secret advisers of the crown. To these Mr. Fox imputed the delay in forming the new administration; and became so pointedly personal, as to call up Mr. Jenkinson, who acknowledged that he had been in conference with the king more than once: as a privy counsellor, he was bound to give his advice when asked; he had done so to the best of his judgment, but never had obtruded his counsel. The proposed address was carried; and his majesty answered, that his earnest desire was to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful commons. On the 31st of March, Mr. Pitt informed the house that he had that day resigned his office; but no new minister having been appointed, the coalition proposed fresh motions in order to hasten the completion of the arrangements.

The coalition come into office. The duke of Portland is first lord of the treasury; lord North and Mr. Fox are secretaries of state.

ON the 20th of April, a new administration was announced, of which the following were the principal members: the duke of Portland was first commissioner of the treasury; lord North, secretary of state for the home department; Mr. Fox, secretary for the foreign; lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the exchequer; lord viscount Keppel, first commissioner of the admiralty; lord viscount Stormont, president of the council; the earl of Carlisle, privy seal: the great seal was put into commission, the first in the nomination being lord Loughborough; the earl of Hertford was appointed chamberlain, and the earl of Dartmouth steward of the household; lord viscount Townshend was made master general of the ordnance; Mr. Burke, paymaster general; Mr. Charles Townshend, treasurer of the navy; Mr. Fitzpatrick, secretary of war; Mr. Wallace and Mr. Lee had the offices of attorney and solicitor general; and the earl of Northington was appointed to the lord lieutenancy of Ireland.

THE first business that engaged the attention of the new ministers was to open a commerce with North

^q The words inserted in italics are extracted from a motion of Mr. Fox, in 1782, against lord North and his colleagues.

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Revival of
commerce
with Ame-
rica.

America. By the prohibitory acts which had been passed during the revolt, all communication with that country, in the way of trade, was entirely precluded; it was the prevailing opinion in parliament, that those acts were virtually repealed by the acknowledgment of the independence of the United States; nevertheless in their new character they became subject to other restrictions which it was necessary to relax and modify. A bill for this purpose had been brought into the house of commons by the late ministry, but during the great variety of discussions which it underwent, difficulties of such a complicated and important nature had arisen, that it never got through the committee. In the mean time, no regulations whatever having been stipulated by the treaty of peace, the commercial interests of the country were suffering very materially; for not only a great number of vessels richly freighted for America, were detained in the harbour, but there was a considerable danger of having the market preoccupied by our rivals. In this emergency, the new ministers thought it most advisable to drop the whole bill for the present, and to pass two short laws, one to repeal all the prohibitory acts, the other to remove the necessity of requiring manifests or other documents, and to lodge in the king and council, for a limited time, a power to make such regulations as might be expedient.

On the 7th of May, Mr. William Pitt made a motion respecting the reform of parliamentary representation; the mode intended last year of examining the subject by a committee was accounted too general, he therefore designed to bring forward specific propositions. The object of the first was to prevent bribery at elections, the second proposed to disfranchise a borough which should be convicted of gross corruption; but that the minority of voters should be entitled to a vote for the county in which such boroughs should be situated; his third proposition was, that an augmentation of the knights of shires, and representatives of the metropolis, should be added to the state of the representation. He left the number for future discussion, but said he should recommend one hundred. The arguments both for and against a parliamentary

Mr. Wil-
liam Pitt
proposes a
specific
plan of re-
form.

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Motion of
the duke of
Richmond
respecting
the great
seal,

is combat-
ted by lord
Loughbo-
rough.

reform were nearly the same as in the preceding session, but the supporters constituted a smaller proportion; the majority against the reform were two hundred and ninety-three to one hundred and forty-nine. On the 8th of June, the duke of Richmond introduced a motion respecting the great seal being put into commission. The appointment of judges (he alleged) commissioners, with large salaries and perquisites dependent on the will of the crown, tended to invalidate acts for securing the independency of the judicative officers: to ensure this great object it was necessary, he contended, first, that the tenure of their offices should be certain; secondly, that the amount of their salaries should be ascertained, and thus the temptations arising from fear of removal, or hopes of greater gain, would be prevented. His grace, by a metaphysical disquisition on the nature of the passions, showed that hope and fear were such powerful affections, as often to overcome justice and rectitude; and having argued in support of his motion concerning the great seal, he proceeded to some general observations on the incompatibility of the situation of a judge and a statesman, and endeavoured to support his reasonings by the authority of writers on political government. From his arguments and authorities he inferred, that neither the lords chief justices, nor lords chancellors, ought to sit in the house of peers. Lord Loughborough replied to his grace in a speech which was esteemed equal to any that ever was delivered, even by its author himself. The motion, he argued, proceeded on a visionary speculation, the mover had stated no actual grievance; but had proposed redress. The best and only test of political truth was experience; the practice had often obtained of putting the seals into commission; the judges had long sitten in parliament, no evil or inconvenience had been experienced in the administration of justice from their voice in the legislature, and most important benefit had accrued to parliament from their legal and judicial ability and knowledge. These were strong and striking facts not to be controverted by vague observations on the nature of hope and fear; such disquisitions belonged to the schools; legislatures rarely or never adopted them, but contented themselves with the

application of law to any ill habit of the mind, as it became predominant, and inconvenient to the just and rational ends of government. A theory, professing to have for its object a practical corrective and improvement, should show what is amiss, and point out the manner in which it is to be reformed: on these grounds the motion was rejected. During this session a bill passed both houses for removing and preventing all doubts which had arisen, or might arise concerning the exclusive right of the parliament and courts of Ireland in matters of legislation and judicature; and for preventing any writ of error or appeal from any of his majesty's courts in the sister kingdom from being received, heard, and adjudged in any of his majesty's tribunals in Britain. Before the judicial and legislative independence of Ireland had been recognised, it was usual to remove causes by a writ of error from the Irish courts to the British. An appeal of this sort was before the court of king's bench when the last settlement was made; the chief justice considering it necessary to proceed with pending suits, had given a judgment: this procedure, though unavoidable on the part of his lordship, had excited violent clamours in Ireland. To pacify these they proposed the present bill, though really implied in the general arrangement of the former year. A variety of economical regulations took place, more numerous than important. The objects, indeed, were the minute departments of public offices, such as salaries of clerks and their deputies, but no plan was proposed for diminishing the momentous departments of national expense.

Minute regulations of economy.

GEORGE, prince of Wales, had now reached the years of manhood; and his age and dignified rank called for a separate establishment, as a measure agreeable to the uniform practice respecting the heir of the crown, while his personal character, his talents and accomplishments, rendered it additionally desirable that he should be placed in a situation in which he could more fully exhibit the elegance of his taste, the dignified and engaging gracefulness of his manners, the beneficent generosity of his disposition, his liberal patronage of merit, and his many other princely virtues. His highness in his early youth had attended little to party distinction, but gay and animated,

George, prince of Wales.

abilities and character of.

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intelligent, erudite, and refined; - he had sought pleasure and wit, information, ability, and taste, wherever they were to be found. - He was particularly captivated by the open, liberal, and impressive manners, and the social qualities of Mr. Charles Fox, while he admired the unassuming greatness of his character. The habits of that gentleman were also peculiarly attractive to youth; he was no austere ascetic, he was pleasurable and gay; in point of frolic and indulgence, at thirty, such a companion as suited the ideas of eighteen. Through Mr. Fox, his highness came to associate often with the wit of a Hare and a Sheridan, and sometimes with the wisdom of a Burke. The party now in power was considered as most agreeable to his highness; but the proposal for the establishment was received with unanimity by all. It was found, on considering the royal message, that his majesty required only a temporary aid of sixty thousand pounds for the equipment of the prince, and that he meant to settle fifty thousand a year on his highness from the civil list. The sum desired was immediately voted, and an address of thanks presented to his majesty.

A separate establishment is appointed for his highness.

Indian affairs:

the committees continue their investigations.

Mr. Dundas exhibits a comprehensive statement of affairs and of executive conduct.

INDIAN affairs continued this year to occupy the unremitting attention of the two committees; but from the unsettled state of government, during a considerable part of the session, no important measures were adopted either for redressing the grievances, or investigating the delinquency stated in the reports, or forming systems for the future regulation of Indian affairs. Mr. Dundas having in the secret committee, investigated an immense mass of evidence, oral and written, in April 1782, exhibited a clear and connected detail of the state and the history of India, from the establishment of the new system of 1773; the real interests of the company, the general laws and successive special directions transmitted to the company's servants for the preservation and promotion of those interests; the actual conduct of the principal servants and their subordinate agents, and the existing situation of those settlements. From these multiform, numerous, and complicated materials, the energetic and simplifying mind of Mr. Dundas educed the general principles in two great propositions. There was very gross mismanage-

ment, which it became the deliberative wisdom of the legislature to correct, and also to devise means of improving the resources to the highest advantage. There was likewise an appearance of misconduct and misdemeanors, which it behoved judicial inquiry to examine. For these purposes he proposed that a committee of the whole house should sit upon the affairs of India. The two principal objects of inquisitorial procedure, stated by Mr. Dundas, were sir Thomas Rumbold, governor of Madras, and Warren Hastings, esq. governor general of Bengal. Having in a variety of propositions drawn the outline of Mr. Hastings's alleged conduct, he moved a severe censure on the proceedings of the governor general, and his coadjutor in council Mr. Hornsby; and a declaration that it was the duty of the directors to recal them from India.^r He also moved a bill of pains and penalties against sir Thomas Rumbold, on various charges of speculation, corruption, and disobedience of the company's orders; violation of treaties, assumption of undue powers, and deterioration of the company's interest, for his own private emolument and that of his underlings: he moreover charged that officer with having bestowed iniquitous grants on the nabob of Arcot; by injustice and faithlessness provoked, for his own avaricious purposes, the enmity of the nizam, and thereby endangered the possessions of the company. As it was just and necessary that, before the bill should be passed, the accused should be heard in his own defence and the subject was very extensive and intricate, by the prorogation of parliament, in July, it was necessarily postponed to the following session. So much of the session of 1783, was consumed in the debates between the parties, that it was late before sir Thomas Rumbold occupied a great share of their attention. Mr. Dundas persevered in supporting the charges against Rumbold, and controverting his defence. But towards the close of the session, the committee of the house was so thinly attended, and appeared so little concerned to ascertain the merits of the case, that the prosecutor deemed farther procedure hopeless, and agreed to

^r The directors passed a resolution for the recal, which was afterwards overturned by the court of proprietors.

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Interval
between the
War and
the Peace.

Meanwhile the king recommended to them to employ their influence in their respective districts in promoting a spirit of industry, regularity, and order, as the true sources of revenue and power to the nation.

THE events of Britain, either foreign or domestic, during the recess of 1783, were of little importance compared with those which the history has presented in recording the struggles of an arduous contest; the energy of war had ceased, the industry and enterprise of peace were not begun. The nation in the interval of action, seemed to be in a state of languor, from which it could be roused only by very strong stimulatives. Trade was stagnant, taxes, compared with the supposed resources of the country, enormous; the national debt doubled in eight years, appeared overwhelming. Depression of situation and spirits, reciprocally increased each other, by action and reaction; distress encouraged despondency, despondency precluded exertion and enterprise, the only effectual means of alleviating and removing distress. Occupied chiefly by party contention, the legislature had, in the late session, devised no effectual means for the improvement of the peace: the present administration, however able many of its members actually were, did not possess the confidence of the majority of the people; and extrication from melancholy circumstances was not expected from their counsels. To these political causes of gloomy retrospect and forebodings, the present, though temporary, pressure of scarcity added its distresses. The crops of 1782 had been extremely deficient in all parts of these realms, and having been also unproductive on the continent, had much diminished the usual sources of importation. The wants of the poor concurring with so many other incentives to discontent, produced great disturbances and riots in various parts of the country. In several places, especially puritanical districts of Scotland, enthusiasm contributed its share to the disorders. The anti-popish societies still continued to exist among the very lowest orders; in the abhorrence of the Romish church great numbers of mechanics and manufacturing journeymen avowed their displeasure against that government by which they affirmed popery to be impiously protected.

They insulted and outraged the magistracy, attacked the military, and even killed several soldiers. Their zeal becoming more eccentric and extravagant, they branched out into various sects, which, whatever might be the peculiar chimeras of their phrensy, concurred in disavowing allegiance, every moral obligation and duty, if they conceived them to interfere with their theological notions.^s One sentiment they appeared to have borrowed from the fifth monarchy men of Cromwellian celebrity, that *all things are lawful unto the saints*. A relaxation of order manifested itself in a variety of crimes, especially around the metropolis. Theft and forgery were extremely frequent, robbery became more daring and atrocious, murder and barbarity, formerly so rare among English depredators, now abounded; the increase of depravity was great and alarming.

THE national and public acts of the country at this season, were chiefly the evacuation of America on the 3d of September; and the preliminaries between Britain and the states general were also subscribed the same day. This year a commotion in a distant state produced a considerable accession of arts and industry to his majesty's dominions; certain alterations having been proposed in the constitution of the illustrious though small republic of Geneva, a great proportion of the inhabitants were so averse to the changes, that they determined to emigrate, and appointed commissioners to collect information concerning asylums wherein they might enjoy the greatest security, and be able to improve to the best advantage their resources of property and character. In the beginning of 1783 these commissioners arrived in Dublin, and were received with affectionate kindness by the hospitable and generous Irish. The delegates of the volunteer corps of the province of Leinster, unanimously resolved, that the inhabitants of Geneva, who sought refuge from oppression and tyranny, deserved the highest commendation; and that such of them as established themselves in that country

Settlement
of Gene-
vise emi-
grants

^s The reader will find in the Gentleman's Magazine, and other periodical works for the year 1783, details and documents which fully authenticate and support this general account; especially Gentleman's Magazine, p. 249 and 340; London Magazine, p. 88; and Morning Chronicle, repeatedly, under the signature of a Scotch Highlander.

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should always receive the warmest support. The commissioners applied to government for its sanction to the desired settlement; and the lord lieutenant was empowered by his majesty to signify not only his royal approbation and assurance of protection and regard, and the enjoyment of such privileges as would contribute to their welfare and prosperity; but to promise also pecuniary assistance to enable them to execute the projected emigration and establishment. Their commissioners were requested to detail the privileges and regulations which they wished to be granted to their intended place of residence; and were told, that after being approved by his majesty's law servants, they should be extended into a charter. It was recommended to the commissioners to examine, with all expedition, a situation for their new town; and further, to establish in it an academy on the principle of those of Geneva, through which the youth of all countries in Europe had derived such important benefit. The commissioners chose the county of Waterford as the scene of the proposed colony. Of these gentlemen, the most active was Mr. D'Ivernois, since so well known in political literature, by the title of sir Francis D'Ivernois.

Conti-
nental oc-
currences.

WHILE on the northern confines of the Alps, the dissensions of man were producing political separation; in that delightful country, which stretches from their southern frontiers, the discord of the elements caused a most tremendous natural convulsion. The portion of Italy which, from being a principal scene of Grecian colonies, was anciently known by the name of Grecia Magna; and in modern times bears the appellation of the Two Calabrias, suffered a succession of earthquakes, the longest, most dreadful and destructive to the face of the country, and to mankind, that was ever experienced in those regions. The first shock happened about noon on the 5th of February 1783, and was of all the most fatal; it came on suddenly, without any of the usual indications; it was about the Italian time of dinner, when the people were in their houses; but beyond all, the motion of the earth in that shock was vertical, rising suddenly upwards from its foundations, and as suddenly sinking again. By this

fatal motion the greatest buildings, villages, towns, and entire cities were instantaneously involved in one common destruction ; nothing remaining to be seen but vast heaps of undistinguishable ruins, without any traces of streets or houses. One of the towns and cities where the greatest devastation took place was Casal Nuova, in which the princess Gerase Grimaldi, with more than four thousand of her subjects, perished in the same instant. At Baguara, above three thousand of the inhabitants were lost, Radicina and Palma counted their loss at above three thousand each : Terra Nuovo at about fourteen hundred ; and Semina at still more. The greater mischief was in Calabria Ultra, the extreme province of Italy next to Sicily. The inhabitants of Scylla sought refuge on the celebrated rock from its vicinity to which the town was denominated ; and following the example of their prince, descended to a little harbour at the foot of the hill, where getting into boats, or stretched upon the shore, they thought themselves free from danger. But in the course of the night, a stupendous wave, which is said to have been driven furiously over land, upon its return swept away the unfortunate prince, with two thousand four hundred and seventy-three of his subjects. The northeast angle of Sicily, including the city of Messina, were likewise in a considerable degree victims of that shock. But the greatest violence of its exertion, and its most dreadful effects, were in the plain on the western side of the Appennines ; mountains were rent, valleys closed ; the hills that formed them being thrown from their places, and meeting their opposites in the centre, the course of rivers was necessarily changed, or the waters being entirely dammed up, they were turned into great and increasing lakes.^u

THE earth in all that part of Italy continued for many weeks in a constant state of tremor ; and several

^t Many of the barons of the kingdom of Naples have the title of princes.

^u The whole of the mortality, according to the returns made to the secretary of state's office in Naples amounted to 33,567. These returns, drawn up in the confusion and misery that prevailed, could not be accurate ; and it was supposed by the best judges, that the real loss, including strangers, amounted at least to 40,000. These estimates only take in immediate victims to the earthquakes ; those who perished through want, diseases, anguish, and every species of subsequent distress not being included.

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shocks with different degrees of violence, were every day felt, so that the unhappy people, already worn down with calamity and grief, through the loss of their property and of their dearest relations, were still kept in a continual state of apprehension and terror. The king and government of Naples employed every possible means for both affording immediate relief to the sufferers, and assistance towards their recovery from the loss of their property. The archbishop of Reggio particularly distinguished himself for benevolence and charity. He disposed of his own furniture, equipages, and most productive moveables, and employed all the money he could raise to alleviate the distresses of his flocks. Having exhausted his pecuniary resources, he still, by infusing the cordial balm of sympathy, allayed those miseries which he could not remove. This truly christian pastor is not unworthy of being ranked with the celebrated bishop of Marseilles, as one of the numberless instances of the beneficent purposes to which recently reproached hierarchs applied their possessions.

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Constituents and strength of the coalition ministry.—

Combines genius, political experience, and aristocratical influence.—Meeting of parliament.—His majesty's

speech—recommends to their consideration British India—commerce and revenue.—Mr. Fox's East India bill—ob-

ject, to vest the whole affairs of the company in certain commissioners to be appointed by parliament, and admin-

ister commercial as well as territorial concerns.—Arguments for the bill.—The company is in a state of bank-

ruptcy, and unfit to manage its own affairs.—The enormous abuses of its servants, and the distresses of India.—

The bill is opposed by Mr. Pitt.—Arguments against the bill, that it is an infringement of chartered rights,

without the justification of necessity—and the formation of an influence dependent on the present ministers.—By

Mr. Dundas.—He charges Mr. Fox with aspiring at perpetual dictatorship.—Burke's celebrated speech on the

extent and bounds of chartered rights.—Allegations against Mr. Hastings.—Petitions of the India compa-

ny.—Bill passes the commons by a great majority.—Other corporate bodies petition against the violation of a

charter.—Bill becomes obnoxious to the public.—Bill rejected by the lords.—Causes assigned by ministry for

the rejection of the bill.—Alleged to be disagreeable to his majesty.—Reported interference through earl Temple

canvassed in the house of commons.—Ministers dismissed their offices.—Character of Mr. Fox's East India bill—

whether right or wrong, decisive and efficient—thoroughly adapted to its end, whether good or bad—tended

to secure Mr. Fox's continuance in power, however that power might be used.—General outcry against Mr. Fox.—

Impartial estimate of this political scheme.—Mr. William Pitt prime minister, with a minority in the house of com-

mons.—Unpopularity of Mr. Fox and the coalition party.—Mr. Pitt's East India bill—rejected.—Question on

dictation to the crown by the commons in the choice of a minister.—King, peers, and the public favourable to Mr. Pitt.—Attempt of independent gentlemen to effect an accommodation between the ministerial and opposition party.—Meeting for that purpose.—Correspondence with the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt.—Design proves abortive.—Display of Mr. Pitt's talents and character, in resisting such a confederacy of genius and power.—Public estimation of the contending leaders.—The king declares his intention of taking the sense of his people.—Dissolution and character of this parliament.

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Constitu-
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They com-
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influence.

THE season now approached for the meeting of parliament: in the last session ministers had done little more than procure their appointments. They had proposed no important schemes of policy to ascertain their collective character: the public might conjecture what they would be, but could not yet know what they were. The coalition administration, it was obvious, had many symptoms of strength superior to that which was possessed by any ministry since the commencement of this reign. It combined the leading members of both parties that prevailed during the American war; united philosophy and genius with official experience: and to consolidate parts formerly heterogeneous into one mass, a great weight of aristocratic influence was superadded. Lord North retained many of his numerous supporters: Mr. Fox had a less numerous, but a still more able band of friends. The result of this union of genius, experience, rank and property, was a majority seldom seen in favour of ministers from the time of the illustrious Pitt. The friends of this ministry conceived it to comprise all that was requisite to heal the wounds and restore the prosperity of their country. Its opponents, from the character of its principal members, and especially its acting head, equally expected boldness, decision and efficacy; but a mischievous, not a beneficial efficacy. They conceived the leaders of the two component parties, by their extraordinary junction, to have sacrificed all public principle at the altar of ambition. They apprehended, that by forcing themselves into the counsels of their sovereign, they had thereby infringed the

kingly prerogative, and in it the British constitution. Having so interpreted the views and conduct of administration, they inferred, that their measures would be directed to the preservation and extension of their own power, instead of the good of the country.

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PARLIAMENT assembled on the 11th of November, and soon afforded an opportunity of considering the schemes of administration. His majesty's speech was short, but extremely comprehensive; the definitive treaties of peace had been concluded; the important and extensive inquiries long carried on respecting India affairs, were pursued with diligence, and the fruit of them would be expected in the provisions of parliamentary wisdom, to maintain and improve the valuable advantages which we derived from our oriental possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces. The season of peace would call for their attention to every possible means of recruiting the strength of the nation, after such a long and expensive war. One of the first objects of deliberation was the security and increase of the revenue in the manner which should be least burdensome to the subjects. Dangerous frauds had prevailed, and daring outrages were committed respecting the collection of the public revenue: and to prevent the continuance of such depredations, it would be necessary to adopt new provisions. The house of commons were informed of the reduction of all the establishments as far as prudence would and admit, of the closing expenses requisite at such a time, reminded of the necessity of supporting the national credit.

Meeting of parliament.

His majesty's speech recommends to their consideration British India, commerce, and revenue.

THE primary importance of these objects was undeniable; and an address consonant to the speech was unanimously passed in both houses. Mr. Pitt expressed his high approbation of the ends proposed by government, though he made some animadversions on the tardiness of ministers, in not having been farther advanced in measures for the accomplishment of such momentous purposes. On all these grand subjects, he counselled them to bring forward great, efficient and permanent systems; as he highly applauded the ends which they professed to seek, he trusted the means which they would devise would be equally meritorious; in which case, they should have his warmest

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support. Mr. Fox, impressed with the very highest idea of Mr. Pitt's talents, declared, nothing could afford him more satisfaction as a minister, or proud exultation as a man, than to be honoured with the praise and support of Mr. Pitt.^x He expressed very high approbation of the general principles which he had briefly sketched concerning the objects of their intended deliberation. He acknowledged that India affairs could ill brook delay: through the industry and ability of their committee, however, the time which they had occupied was the means of affording parliament the most accurate and complete information; so that no assembly could be better acquainted with the subject on which they were called to deliberate: he concluded with announcing, that, on the 18th of November, he should propose a plan for the government of India.

East India
bill of Mr.
Fox.

Object to
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fairs of the
company
in certain
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sioners to
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ed by par-
liament;
and to ad-
minister
commer-
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rial con-
cerns.

On the day appointed, Mr. Fox moved the house for leave to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the East India company in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietors and the public; and also a bill for the better government of the territorial possessions and dependencies in India. In the former of these propositions, a preamble stated, that disorders existed and increased in the management of the British territorial possessions, revenues, and commerce, in the East Indies; which diminished the prosperity of the natives, impaired and threatened with utter ruin the valuable interests of this nation. The government of the present directors and proprietors was to be suspended; they were to be deprived of the whole administration of their territorial and commercial affairs; of their books, papers, documents, and their house in Leadenhall street. The total direction of all their concerns, mercantile, financial, and political, was henceforward to be vested in seven commissioners; namely, William earl Fitzwilliam, the right honourable Frederic Montague, lord George viscount Lewisham, the honourable George Augustus North, sir Gilbert Elliot, sir Henry Fletcher, and Robert Gregory, esq. These commissioners were to be appointed for the first time by the whole legislature; but afterwards by the crown: they

^x Parliamentary debates, 1783-4.

were to hold their offices by the same tenure as the judges of England, during their good behaviour, and to be removed only by address from either house of parliament : they were to be assisted by seven directors ; who should each possess at least two thousand pounds India stock, and have no mercantile concern with the company. The first seven were named in the bill : vacancies were to be supplied by a majority of the proprietors, on an open poll. Any or all of the assisting directors might be removed by five of the commissioners ; and thus the commissioners were to hold the supreme direction and exclusive patronage of all India affairs. In the exercise of this immense power, they were required to come to a decision upon every question within a limited time, or to assign a specific reason for their delay. They must submit, once in every six months, an exact state of their accounts and establishments to both houses of parliament ; they were never to vote by ballot, and must enter upon their journals the reasons of their vote. Such were the outlines of this celebrated bill. The proposed plan appeared to combine efficiency in the powers intrusted, openness in the required progress of its exercise, and responsibility that it should be employed for the intended purposes. If therefore, the objects were beneficial to our Indian interests and to the whole British empire, and the persons chosen were completely qualified for executing the trust reposed, there can be no doubt that their powers were fully sufficient. This bill for the general management of Indian concerns, was accompanied by a second bill, the professed object of which was, to prevent all kinds of arbitrary and despotical proceedings from the administration of the territorial possessions ; it defined the authority of the governor general, suppressed all power of acting independently of his council, proscribed the delegation of any trust, and declared every existing British servant in India incompetent to the acquisition or exchange of any territory in behalf of the company ; to the conclusion of any treaty of partition ; to appoint to office any person removed for misdemeanor ; to lend to native powers the company's troops ; and to hire out any property to any civil officers of the company : it voided all monopolies, and declared every illegal present recoverable by any

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Arguments
for the bill.

person for his sole benefit. One part of the second bill particularly respected the zemindars or native landholders, secured to them an estate of inheritance, without an alteration of rents ; and endeavoured to preclude all vexatious and usurious claims ; to forbid mortgages, and to subject all doubtful demands to the examination and censure of the commissioners. It prescribed a mode for terminating the disputes between the nabob of Arcot and the rajah of Tanjore ; and disqualified every person in the service of the company from sitting in the house of commons during the continuance of his employment, and for a certain specified term after his dismissal. As the scheme of Mr. Fox proposed to take away from the India company the management of the whole and every part of their own commercial affairs, as well as the territorial possessions, its author drew his arguments to support it from two sources : the embarrassed state of the company's finances ; the durable and comprehensive abuses which had prevailed in the government of India. The distressed situation of the company's affairs he endeavoured to prove from the following circumstances : they had applied the preceding year to parliament for pecuniary assistance ; they had asked leave to borrow five hundred thousand pounds upon bonds : they had petitioned for three hundred thousand pounds in exchequer bills ; and for the suspension of a demand upon them, on the part of government, for seven hundred thousand pounds due for customs. By an act of parliament, the directors were prohibited from accepting bills beyond three hundred thousand pounds, drawn in India ; yet, at this very time, bills to the amount of more than two millions were on their way from India for acceptance. Their actual debt was eleven millions two hundred thousand pounds ; and they had stock in hand, towards paying this immense incumbrance, only to the amount of about three millions, two hundred thousand pounds. The result of this comparison was a balance against them of eight millions ; a deficiency which was extremely alarming, when compared with the capital of the proprietors. He would not hesitate to declare the company actually bankrupt : if they were not assisted, they must unavoidably be ruined ; and the fall of a body of merchants so extensive

in their concerns, and so important in the eyes of Europe, must necessarily give a very alarming blow to our national credit. Parliament must permit the acceptance to be made, and interfere for their support; but it would be absurd in itself, and unjust to the nation, for legislature to grant them succour, without taking for the public security the total direction of their pecuniary affairs. This was an interference not only wise but absolutely necessary. Concerning the abuses that prevailed in the government of India, he began with the conduct of the company at home, the nature of their connexion with their officers abroad, the conduct of the servants in general, and of Mr. Hastings in particular, elucidated from the reports of the committee. The plan which he proposed would, he contended, prevent the recurrence of such abuses, promote the prosperity of the British interest, and change the condition of the natives from oppression and misery to security and comfort.

THE first, most strenuous and powerful opposer of the bill was Mr. Pitt. The reasons which he urged against it were reducible to two general heads. "The proposed scheme," he said, "annihilated chartered rights, and created a new and immense body of influence, unknown to the British constitution." He admitted that India wanted reform; but not such a reform as broke through every principle of equity and justice. The bill proposed to disfranchise the members, and confiscate the property of the East India company; it required directors, trustees chosen by proprietors for the behalf of those constituents, and under their control, to surrender all lands, tenements, houses, books, records, charters, instruments, vessels, goods, money, and securities, to persons over whom the owners were to possess no power of interference in the disposal of their own property; on what principle of law or justice could such a confiscation be defended? The rights of the company were conveyed in a charter expressed in the clearest and strongest terms that could be conceived. It was clearer, stronger, and better guarded in point of expression, than the charter of the bank of England; the right by which our gracious sovereign held the sceptre of these kingdoms, was not more fully confirmed, nor farther removed from the possibility of all plausible

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The company in a state of bankruptcy, and unfit for managing its own affairs. The enormous abuses of its servants, and distresses of India.

The bill is opposed by Mr. Pitt.

Arguments against the bill, that it is a violation of chartered rights without the justification of necessity.

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the present
ministers.

By Mr.
Dundas ;

who
charges
Mr. Fox
with seek-
ing perpe-
tual dicta-
torship.

question. The principle of this bill once established, what security had the other public companies of the kingdom ? What security had the bank of England ? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations ? or, indeed, what assurance could we have for the great charter itself, the foundation of all our privileges, and all our liberties ? The power indeed was pretended to be created in trust for the benefit of the proprietors ; but, in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal ? To the proprietors ? No ; but to a majority of either house of parliament, which the most drivelling minister could not fail to secure with the patronage of about two millions sterling given by this bill. But the proposition was still more objectionable in another way, it was calculated to increase the influence of the minister to an enormous and alarming degree. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority the whole treasure of India. These poured forth like an irresistible torrent upon this country, would sweep away our liberties and all we could call our own.

MR. DUNDAS argued, that the immediate tendency of the bill was so far from being to increase the influence of the crown, that it must inevitably overbear its power : it created a fourth estate, which would overturn the balance of the three established by the constitution. The opposers of the bill proceeded to attack its author's motives. Mr. Fox was a man of the most splendid ability, the most intrepid and daring spirit, and unbounded ambition. He professed himself a party man, and it was a leading article in his political creed, that Britain ought to be governed by a party : to perpetuate such a government was the design of the present scheme. This bill exhibited all the most prominent features of its author's character and sentiments : its end was perpetual dictatorship to himself ; the projected means were the whole influence of India possessed and exercised by the members and agents of a party which were totally at his devotion. The motives of the coalition were before easily divined ; new success encouraged them to unfold their intentions ; and their designs became fully manifested. To force his way to the supreme direction of

those statesmen whom he had uniformly professed to reprobate; he headed them in censuring that peace, which, in less trying circumstances, he uniformly professed to recommend: and thus found an opportunity of attaining the power which he through that coalition sought. His views extending as he advanced, he now proposed to make his power perpetual and uncontrollable. Such was the opinion which Messrs. Dundas and Pitt, and their supporters, delivered concerning Mr. Fox's East India bill.

Burke's celebrated speech on the extent and bounds of chartered rights.

THE combined force of philosophy, eloquence, and poetry, was employed by Mr. Burke in supporting this grand project of his friend. A considerable portion of his own reasoning was exerted to controvert the arguments drawn from the annihilation of the company's charter: he admitted, to the fullest extent, that the charter of the East India corporation had been sanctioned by the king and parliament; that the company had bought it, and honestly paid for it; and that they had every right to it which such a sanction and such a purchase could convey. Having granted this position to the opponents of the bill, he maintained, that notwithstanding that sanction and purchase, the proposed change ought to take place. He proceeded on the great and broad grounds of ethics, arguing that NO SPECIAL COVENANT, HOWEVER SANCTIONED, CAN AUTHORIZE A VIOLATION OF THE LAWS OF MORALITY; if a covenant operate to the misery of mankind, to oppression and injustice, the general obligation to prevent wickedness is antecedent and superior to any special obligation to perform a covenant: parliament had sold all they had a right to sell—an exclusive privilege to trade; but not a privilege to rob and oppress; and if what they disposed of for the purposes of commerce was made the instrument of oppression and pillage, it was their duty, as the guardians of the conduct and happiness of all within the sphere of their influence and control, to prevent so pernicious an operation. After laying down this as a fundamental principle, he proceeded to argue, that there had been, and were, the most flagrant acts of oppression in India, by the servants of the company; that the whole system was oppressive from the beginning of the acquisition of territorial possessions: he entered into a detail of the principal instances of

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Allegations
against Mr.
Hastings.Petitions of
the India
company.The bill
passes the
commons
by a great
majority.

his majesty's government, Mr. Fox had coalesced with rapine, violence, and tyranny, which were attributed to the English; and dwelt with superior energy and pathos on those acts of which he alleged Mr. Hastings to be guilty. No one undertook to deny, as an abstract proposition, that charters or any covenants contravening the principles of morality, and bringing misery on mankind, ought to be annulled; but the allegation was denied respecting the charter of the East India company. THE BILL, it was affirmed, PROPOSED CONFISCATION WITHOUT PROOF OF DELINQUENCY. The proprietors and directors petitioned the house that their securities and property might not be forfeited without evidence of criminality. They desired, that before the house passed a bill which would act as a condemnation, they should prove the guilt. One reason adduced by Mr. Fox for the proscription of their rights was, that they had mismanaged their own affairs, and were insolvent; they denied the alleged bankruptcy, and offered to prove by a statement of their demands and effects, that though somewhat embarrassed, their assets far exceeded their debts; and prayed their situation might be fully inspected before a bill, proceeding on an assumption of their being bankrupts, should be passed. LET NOT, they said, A PARLIAMENTARY DOCKET BE STRUCK WITHOUT GIVING US AN OPPORTUNITY OF CONVINCING EQUITY THAT WE CAN PAY EVERY CREDITOR TWENTY SHILLINGS IN THE POUND. The remonstrating entreaties of the company, and all the opposition in the house of commons, were unavailing: on the 8th of December, the bill passed the house by the large majority of two hundred and eight to one hundred and two.^y The next day Mr. Fox, attended by a great number of members, presented the bill at the bar of the house of lords. When it came to the peers, it met, if not with an abler opposition, with a much more nume-

^y In the closing debate on this bill in the house of commons, Mr. Flood, a very eminent orator in the Irish parliament, lately chosen a member for Winchester, first spoke in the British parliament. Emphatic in his delivery, both pompons and vehement in his manner, he appeared rather to demand than to solicit the attention of the house. Such a mode of elocution, however valuable the matter might be, and cogent the arguments, certainly exposed the speaker to ridicule. This engine was very happily played upon him in the poignant wit, keen and strong satire of Mr. Courtney; who, without invalidating his opponent's arguments, silenced the oratory of Mr. Flood in the British house of commons.

rous in proportion to the number of the assembly. Great force of eloquence and reasoning were exerted on both sides; rarely indeed was there a fuller attendance, and perhaps never did a greater assemblage of ability display itself in our house of lords, than on so momentous a question, that engaged, on the one side, an able body of peers headed by lord Thurlow and lord Camden; on the other a no less able body, headed by lord Loughborough and lord Mansfield. In the house of commons, however, the arguments on both sides had been so completely exhausted, that little novelty appropriate to the question could be brought forward even by such powers of genius. Lord Thurlow spoke to the attack on Hastings, which had been repeated in the house of peers. If (said he) he be a depopulator of provinces, if he be a plunderer, and an enemy to the human race, let his crimes be dragged into the light of day, and let him be punished; but not condemned without a trial.^z Meanwhile, the bill had begun to produce a considerable alarm in the country. Other bodies now followed the example of the East India company, in petitioning against a measure which they considered as an atrocious violation of private property. In the house of peers the opponents of the bill proposed to defer its consideration for several days, until they should have time to receive more adequate information; its supporters were very urgent for the speedy completion of the scheme; but, the former prevailing, it was deferred. The bill was now become extremely obnoxious to the public; the majority of

Other corporate bodies petition against the violation of a charter.

^z Mr. Hastings (he said) was one of the most venerable characters that this country had produced: he had served the East India company for thirty-three years, and twelve years as president at Bengal. He possessed a most extensive knowledge of the languages, the manners, the politics, and the revenues of Indostan. He was a man whose integrity, honour, firmness of mind, and perseverance, had encountered difficulties that would have subdued the spirit of any other man, and had surmounted every obstacle; no impediment, no opposition, could have been more formidable than that of the commission, which seemed to have been sent out for the express purpose of thwarting and opposing all his measures. When he considered the scene of confusion that ensued, the factions and personal spirit by which these men had been animated from the hour of their landing, he sincerely wished they had died before they had set foot in India. But Mr. Hastings had been able to overcome so arduous a trial, and such was the vigour of our government in Bengal; such were the regulations for the administration of justice in the provinces, and such the economical arrangements formed by the civil and military departments, that he did not believe it would be in the power of the folly and ignorance of the most favourite clerks Mr. Fox's directors could send out, to throw Bengal into confusion in the term that was assigned for the duration of his bill. See Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 1783.

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The bill be-
comes ob-
noxious to
the public ;is rejected
by the
lords.Causes
assigned by
ministers
for the re-
jection of
the bill.The bill al-
leged to be
disagree-
able to his
majesty.Reputed
interfe-
rence of
lord
Temple,

the house of peers exhibited the sentiment of a much greater proportion of a majority of the nation. The people appeared to have adopted a totally different opinion from the house of commons.^a The motion for a second reading took place on the 15th, and the house being adjourned to the 17th, the question was put for the commitment, and carried against the minister by a majority of ninety-five to seventy-six ; and thus Mr. Fox's celebrated India bill, after passing the house of commons, was rejected by the lords. The conduct of the peers which, in voting contrary to the house of commons, concurred with the popular voice, was represented by the ministerial party as arising not from conviction, but an extrinsic influence. His majesty, on investigating the nature, tendency, and probable consequences of the bill introduced by Mr. Fox, was understood to be inimical to its adoption. It was conceived, that the more our king reflected on the subject, he was the more deeply impressed with the mischievous effects of the scheme in question, that he thought it would overturn the balance of the constitution ; and that under such an impression, he very freely delivered his sentiments to counsellors whom he did not think members of the coalition confederacy. Among those who enjoyed the greatest degree of the royal confidence was earl Temple, a nobleman of considerable talents, high character, and an ample fortune ; totally unconnected with any party junto, and thereby not only capable, but most probably disposed, to give the best advice. A report prevailed, that in a private conference with his majesty, this nobleman, with the candour and honesty of a faithful and conscientious counsellor, had delivered his sentiments to the king ; and that they coincided with those which the illustrious personage himself entertained. The report farther added, that the opinion of his majesty having been communicated to various peers, had influenced their votes. The clamour against such advisers was revived by ministry ; and it was asserted that, but for these, a majority in the lords would

^a See a periodical paper of those times, entitled the Political Herald, which was edited by the elegant pen of Godwin, but supported by the abler pen of Gilbert Stewart, and frequently invigorated by the masculine strength of William Thomson.

have forwarded the bill proportionate to that which had carried it through the house of commons. This rumour respecting the interference of the sovereign, was never authenticated; it however was believed by the supporters of the bill, and deemed the means of its rejection. The reports were considered by the coalition party of so great importances, as to be the foundation of several resolutions. On the 17th of December, the coalition speakers expatiated on secret influence, which, according to their assumption, still existed. Mr. William Baker made a motion, seconded by lord Maitland, importing, that it was now necessary to declare, that to mention any opinion, or pretended opinion of the king, upon any bill or other proceeding in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was a high crime and misdemeanor, derogatory to the honour of the crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges of parliament, and subversive of the constitution of the country. Mr. Pitt argued on the impropriety of a legislative assembly proceeding on unauthenticated rumours; that monster, public report, was daily fabricating a thousand absurdities and improbabilities; and it was the greatest sarcasm upon every thing serious and respectable to suffer her to intrude on the national business, and for the house to follow her through all her shapes and extravagancies. He was asked, how ministers were to act when circumvented, as they complained of having been, by secret influence, and when the royal opinion was inimical to their measures? In his judgment, their duty, in a situation thus dishonourable and inefficient, was obvious and indispensable? The moment they could not answer for their measures, let them retire: the servants of the crown were worse than useless whenever they were without responsibility. Mr. Fox endeavoured to prove, that the present resolutions were necessary to mark the independence of parliament; and to decide whether it was to be governed by the wisdom and free choice of its members, or by the dictates of the crown. Taking for granted the existence of secret influence, he exercised his eloquence in des-

is canvassed in the house of commons.

^b Authentic and impartial history must consider the assertion concerning secret influence, as an assumption, because the allegation was neither admitted nor proved.

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cribing the evils which it would produce. We are (he said) robbed of our rights, with a menace of immediate destruction before our face: from this moment farewell to every independent measure. Whenever the liberties of the people, the rights of private property, or the still more sacred privileges of personal safety, are vindicated by the house, the hopes of the public, anxious, eager, and panting for the issue, are to be whispered away, and dispersed to every wind of heaven, by the breath of secret influence. A parliament thus fettered and controled, instead of limiting, extends beyond all limit and precedent the prerogative of the crown, and has no longer any use but to register the degrees of despotism, and the arbitrary mandates of a favourite. Thus, according to Mr. Fox, the constitution of England was to become despotical, if the house of commons did not reprobate a secret influence which rumour^c only alleged to exist. A majority of one hundred and fifty-three to eighty voted for the resolution.

THE conduct of his majesty evidently demonstrated that he was not only extremely averse to the East India bill, but highly displeased with its author. On the 18th of December, at twelve at night, he sent a message to the two secretaries of state, intimating that his majesty had no farther occasion for their services, and directing that the seals of office should be delivered to him by the under secretaries, as a personal interview would be disagreeable.

Ministers
are dismissed.

Early the next morning letters of dismissal, signed Temple, were sent to the other members of the cabinet. Immediately the places of first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, were conferred on Mr. William Pitt; lord Temple received the seals as secretary of state; and earl Gower was appointed lord president of the council. On the 22d lord Temple resigned the seals of his office, and they were delivered to lord Sidney, as secretary of state for the home department; and to the marquis of Carmarthen for the foreign. Lord Thurlow was appointed high chancellor of Britain; the duke of Rutland, lord

^c The report was, that a circular card, supposed to have been written by lord Temple, had been transmitted to various peers, purporting his majesty's disapprobation of Mr. Fox's bill, as subversive of the power and dignity of the crown.

privy seal; lord viscount Howe, first lord of the admiralty; and the duke of Richmond, master general of the ordnance; Mr. William Grenville, and lord Mulgrave, succeeded Mr. Burke in the pay-office; and Mr. Henry Dundas was appointed to the office of treasurer of the navy.

THUS terminated the coalition administration, owing its downfall to Mr. Fox's East India bill. In whatever light we view this celebrated measure, we must allow it to be the effort of an expanded and towering genius. Whether the object was beneficial or injurious, the means were great, comprehensive, and efficacious. If, with its framer and supporters, we consider the East India company as guilty of the grossest misconduct in the administration of their affairs; as having brought themselves to a state of insolvency, and thus rendering it necessary for their principal creditor to interfere for his own security, and to prevent them from utterly ruining themselves, the plan was efficient: the company could no longer mismanage their affairs, for Mr. Fox left them none to administer. What the author said of the whole bill, applies to it with great truth: IT WAS NO HALF MEASURE. If the territorial concerns of the company had been so madly, wickedly, and destructively administered by the company's weakness and corruption, and the vices of its servants, the powers proposed by Mr. Fox to be conferred upon his seven friends, rendering them sole, supreme, and complete directors of British India, were thoroughly adequate to every purpose of correction of misconduct, prevention of abuses, and punishment of malversation; his provisions for the zemindars tended most effectually to give to those landholders the security of British subjects. The opponents of the bill, while they reprobated its tendency and design, fully admitted that extraordinary exertions of genius had been employed in adapting it to its end. Considering it as intended to make its seven executors lords of so great a part of the British empire, and its inventor imperial master of the whole, they allowed, that in its general principle, and in its particular provisions, relations, and dependencies, it was most skilfully, ingeniously, and completely fitted to establish in these realms, the government of an

Character
of Mr.
Fox's East
India bill:

whether
right or
wrong, de-
cisive and
efficient:

thoroughly
adapted to
its end,
whether
good or
bad:

fitted to se-
cure to Mr.
Fox conti-
nuance in
power,
however
that power
might be
used.

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oligarchical confederacy, headed by Charles James Fox. Impartial history, without entirely adopting the opinion of either party, must see and exhibit in this plan a most forcible efficacy, that might operate in two ways: on the one hand, as its supporters asserted, it was thoroughly calculated for preventing the recurrence of such evils as had been recently prevalent: and on the other, it was no less obviously and directly fitted to confer on Mr. Fox and his connexions, a power new in the British constitution, far surpassing that which had before belonged to any body or estate under our polity, and without that control on which has depended, and depends, the integrity and efficacy of our several establishments and our political system. Concerning Mr. Fox's motives, the historian, like every other observer of human conduct, will infer intention according to the nature and tendency of the measure, compared with the circumstances of the case, and character of the agent. Examining the scheme, knowing that the ambition most frequently prevalent in great minds occupied no inconsiderable share of Mr. Fox's heart, and perceiving the bill so well framed to gratify that passion, he will not hesitate to assign the love of power as one of the motives. Aware, however, that an inventor, ardent in the promotion of a scheme which has occupied his affections and faculties, and engaged in contemplating its direct and immediate adaptation to proposed ends, may overlook more indirect operations, or more distant consequences; he may conclude, that Mr. Fox did not view, in their whole extent and force, the effects which, unless arrested in its course, the project might have produced. The most probable account which impartial candour can present concerning this important subject of history, appears to be the following: Mr. Fox had acceded to the whig doctrine of governing this country by an aristocratical confederacy. Conscious of his own extraordinary talents, and desirous of that power which would have employed and displayed them, he expected and sought to be leader of an administration which should be supported by such a combination. The sovereign he well knew was averse to a party government. The misfortunes of the war having rendered the ministry of lord North very unpopular, the whig combination came into

power. Finding, in the promotion of lord Shelburne, a deviation from the plans which the whigs had delineated, Mr. Fox and his party resigned. Their own combination not being sufficient to secure them the direction of public affairs, the whig party joined another, before hostile; and from their combined powers, forced the practical adoption of their maxim of ruling by a confederacy. Aware of the disagreeableness of such a ministry to him in whom the constitution vested the choice of executive servants, and naturally apprehending that he would avail himself of an opportunity to exert his own free choice, Mr. Fox, in framing his bill, appears to have endeavoured to guard against the probability of such an event. The permanence of Mr. Fox's connexion in administration, would evidently be a morally certain effect of his bill; and, therefore, may fairly be assigned as one of its principal objects. Mr. Fox's opponents illustrated their conceptions of his scheme, by comparing him to Oliver Cromwel, Julius Cæsar, Cati-line, and other celebrated projectors of usurpation. But an attentive consideration of his character, dispositions, and habits, and, above all, his uniform conduct, by no means justifies the charge of *solitary* ambition. Social in private life, Mr. Fox has always courted association in politics; ambitious of sway, he has sought not only to acquire it by, but to enjoy it with, a party. Besides, had he been ever so desirous of the solitary dominion of protector or dictator, he must have known, that in Britain he never could have attained so uncontrolled a power. His sagacity would not have suffered his designs so very far to outgo every probability of success. Confining the proposed schemes of this great man somewhat near the bounds of probable execution, the historian may fairly venture to affirm, that he intended, by his India bill, to secure the continuance of power to himself, his whig confederacy, and their new allies: and that the whole series of his conduct was a practical adoption of the doctrines of his friend Mr. Burke, in his "Thoughts on the Discontents," exhibiting all the beauties of poetry and depth of philosophy, to minister to party politics, and applying the energies of his genius, the stores of his wisdom, and the fascination of his fancy, to show that Britain,

Outcry
against
Mr. Fox.

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Impartial
estimate of
this politi-
cal scheme.

disregarding the choice of the king, or the talents of the subject, ought to be governed by a whig association. On the whole it is evident, that one of the chief objects of the coalition was, to establish the united parties in the management of government. It is no less manifest, that the East India bill both tended, and was designed to secure to the confederacy the continuance of power. So far impartial history must concur with the opponents of the illustrious Fox. But the reasonableness of the censure, and even obloquy which he thereby incurred, is much more questionable. That Mr. Fox loved power is very obvious, and abstractly neither deserving of praise nor censure. There is little doubt that he was not the minister of the king's predilection and personal choice. The appointment of his executive servants is certainly by the constitution vested in his majesty; but various cases have occurred in the history of England, in which it was not only requisite, but necessary, for the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, to sacrifice private prepossessions to general good: such an event has happened, and always may happen under a free constitution, of which the object is the welfare of the community. The court doctrine at this time, that Mr. Fox and his adherents merited the severest reprobation, *because* they wished to administer the government contrary to the inclination of the king, is by no means obviously true. The unbiassed historian must consider the question on the broad grounds of expediency. Had or had not Charles James Fox, in his parliamentary and executorial conduct, shown such intellectual talents, such force, energy, and decision of mind, as would have rendered him a momentous accession to the counsels of the nation, when the state of affairs required the exertion of the greatest abilities which it contained. Those who thought that he had manifested such talents and qualities, were, by patriotic duty, bound to support the continuance, or attempt the restoration of his power. Mr. Fox, though not thirty-five years of age, was an old senator: for ten years his wisdom, viewing situation and conduct, had predicted events and results with an accuracy almost prophetic. His lessons as a statesman, he had received from moral and political sci-

ence, thorough conversancy with the British constitution, government, and interests, impressed more forcibly on his mind by practical contemplation of the errors of systems, the insufficiency of plans, and the imbecility of execution, followed to their fatal effects. *For only eleven months and a quarter*, in two cabinets, had he been minister. With the marquis of Rockingham, he, in four months, had pacified and enfranchised the discontented and oppressed Irish; he had prepared for terminating a ruinous war; and had promoted retrenchment of the expenditure, which was so burdensome to the nation. In the coalition ministry, he had persevered in promoting economical regulations, which were so much wanted; and had begun successfully to move stagnant commerce. His India bill, even if admitted to be wrong in its object and principle, yet was certainly grand, comprehensive, and efficient. If there was error, it arose, not from the defect of weakness, but the excess of strength. It displayed a range of survey, a fertility and force of invention, a boldness and decision of plan, an openness and directness of execution, that stamped its author as a man of sublime genius, who fearlessly unfolded and published his conceptions. The impartial narrator, using the best of his judgment, must disapprove of the infringement of charters,^c at least till proof was established that their objects had been violated, or deem the new power created greater than was either necessary for its purpose, or consistent with the balance of the constitution; but must acknowledge, that its territorial operation would have been thoroughly and immediately efficacious. The perspicuity of the whole, and every clause, manifested the extent and bounds of the delegated power, defined the mode of its exercise, and the open responsibility under which the trust was to be discharged; and in marking the line of duty, showed the unavoidable consequences of transgression; by precluding the probability of unpunished guilt, it tended to prevent

^c I have been informed by a member of the party that some very eminent senators belonging to it, especially a gentleman who has since risen to be one of its heads, privately advised Mr. Fox to leave the commercial management to the company. If that advice had been followed the chief ground of popular reproach would have been prevented, and Mr. Fox might have continued to be minister.

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the recurrence of oppression; ascertaining the tenure, and securing the rights of property, it would stimulate industry, and render British India infinitely more productive to the proprietors and nation, besides diffusing comfort and happiness to the natives, so long the objects of an iniquity which was disgraceful to the British name. These were the benefits which must have obviously resulted from the plan of Mr. Fox. The confiscation of charters could only be defended on the ground of necessity, and Mr. Fox had not evinced that necessity, and was therefore precipitate and blamable in proposing to proceed upon an assumption, in a case of so high an importance both as to policy and justice. But his propositions on this part of the subject did not necessarily imply unfair intentions. The influence which must have accrued to the confederacy might have been formidable to the constitution, but if it proved so, its dangers must have arisen from the legislators, the guardians of our polity, as to these the proposed commissioners were to be amenable. The new influence might increase ministerial majorities in parliament, but great means of such an augmentation must have arisen from any plan for taking the territorial possessions under the direction of the British government. His East India scheme, both in itself and in combination with his other acts, and the series of his conduct, displayed those talents and qualities, which, when joined, place the possessor in the highest rank of statesmen, and show him fully competent to render to his country the most momentous services. The plan itself is of a mixed character, and liable to many strong objections, yet the impartial examiner will not easily discover, in the whole of this scheme, reasons to convince him, that, *because Mr. Fox proposed this plan for governing India, it was beneficial to the country to be deprived of the executorial efforts of his transcendent abilities.* The historian, unconnected with party, and considering merely the will and power of individuals or bodies to promote the public good, must lament what truth compels him to record, that a personage equalled by so few in extent of capacity and force of character, in fitness for benefitting the nation, during a political life of thirty-five years, should have been enjoy-

ed as a minister by his country only *once for three months and a half, and again for seven months and three quarters.* The situation of the empire required the united efforts of the greatest political abilities, but Britain was not destined to possess the executorial exertions of BOTH her most consummate statesmen.

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By the dismissal of ministers the country found itself in a new situation, about to be governed by an administration, which a very powerful majority in the house of commons thwarted. The new prime minister was a young man in the twenty-fifth year of his age, supported by no family influence, or political confederacy; having no adventitious props; resting solely on his own ability; aided by those whose admiration and confidence his intellectual and moral character had secured; without any means of extending his influence or increasing the number of his friends, but those to be found in his own head and heart. If talents, integrity and conduct, could not create a general confidence and support, which might overbear a particular combination, he must fall. The splendid fame of the father, it is true, had spread an early lustre round the son; but hereditary glory would have little availed against such a host, without similar virtues. Able individuals supported him, but against so compact and strong a phalanx, little would have been their weight, unless invigorated, directed, and led by extraordinary talents. The majority in the house of commons was very great, and there was little prospect of its being materially reduced. It was obvious that no ministry could be of long duration, without the support of a house of commons: it was readily perceived, that either ministry or parliament must be dissolved. The consequences of a dissolution depended simply upon the prevailing sentiment throughout the nation. Mr. Burke has remarked that the house of commons ought to be *an express image of the opinions and feelings of the people.* If in the present case such a sympathy existed between representatives and constituents, dissolution could answer no purpose, as a majority friendly to the coalition must be returned; but Mr. Fox's party appeared not to entertain sanguine hopes from such an appeal.

Mr. William Pitt prime minister, in a minority of the house of commons; the tenure of his office, his personal talents and character without adventitious aid,

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Unpopularity of Mr. Fox and the coalition.

HAVING endeavoured to the best of my judgment to exhibit the conduct of Mr. Fox and his supporters as it really was, it is necessary, in order to show the connexion of events, to exhibit the impression which it had made on the majority of the people ; as that impression, much more than the real merits of their policy, produced their permanent exclusion from the councils of their sovereign. A comprehensive biographer, who should view the whole conduct and character of Fox, estimate excellence and defect, and strike an impartial balance, after allowing grounds of censure, must unquestionably perceive that there remained an immense surplus of subject for transcendent admiration. But perhaps there never was an eminent man whose actions and character, viewed in partial and detached lights, could lead an observer to grosser misconception of the whole. Both his private and public life were of a mixed nature. The most sublime genius, the most simplifying and profound wisdom, did not preclude the indulgence of propensities, and the recurrence of acts, diametrically opposite to reason and sound judgment. Ardent benevolence and patriotism did not prevent the encouragement, by both precept and example, of practices and habits injurious to the individual, and, according to the extent of their influence, prejudicial to the public welfare. Just and honourable himself, his amusements and relaxations promoted vices tending to render their votaries unjust and dishonourable. In every part of his conduct, Mr. Fox was extremely open ; if there was ground of blame, it must be known, as no endeavours were used for concealment. His supereminent excellencies could be apprehended but very vaguely and indistinctly, unless by comparatively few ; but his faults were obvious to the most vulgar examiners. As the multitude of all ranks and denominations were incompetent to form a judgment of such a man themselves, they took up their opinions upon the report and authority of others ; these were favourable or unfavourable according to the sentiments and wishes of their authors. Where his enemies were the teachers of the opinions, in partial views of his conduct, they found plausible grounds of censure and obloquy. Besides the foibles of his private life, his public conduct afforded ample

materials to advocates, who chose to assail his reputation. From the time that the American war, by the losses which it produced, and the burdens which it imposed, brought home to the experience and feelings of the people, became unpopular, the most ardent and powerful promoter of peace was regarded as the patriot who was to extricate his country from impending ruin. His popularity became still higher, as he procured a vote for the discontinuance of the war, and expelled the obnoxious ministers from the councils of the king. Under the government of the whigs, the people expected the empire to recover its ancient splendor, and themselves their former comforts and prosperity. The reforming and improving acts of the Rockingham administration confirmed this opinion. When, on the appointment of lord Shelburne, Mr. Fox withdrew his abilities from the councils of his country, many began to be staggered in their conviction of his patriotism : but when the coalition took place, the gross and undistinguishing multitude was satisfied, that a junction between two parties and two men formerly so hostile, must be bad and mischievous in itself. Its able opponents saw, that the mere junction was neither good nor ill, but that the justness of censure must depend on the objects and subsequent conduct of the confederacy ; yet aware, that this reasoning was too refined for the comprehension of the multitude, with great skill, dexterity, and effect, they reechoed, “ *the monstrous inconsistency of the coalition ;*” and when its members came into administration, impressed great numbers of the people with a belief, that a ministry so formed must be unprincipled and worthless, however able and powerful. The receipt tax drawing hourly on their pockets, though in so petty sums, teased and fretted their minds already sore. The East India bill, in its objectionable parts, the infringement of charters, and the forcible interference in the administration of a mercantile company’s affairs, was perfectly intelligible to the most common apprehensions ; shocked the ideas of a trading people, and suggested probable cases, which by obvious analogies could be brought home to their own feelings ; whereas the benefit that might accrue to British India and its native inhabitants, much less attracted their attention, affected their imaginations, or interest-

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ed their passions. A plain farmer, manufacturer, or tradesman, could easily conceive the hardship of having his affairs subjected to trustees not chosen by himself, when he knew or believed himself to be solvent, and competent to the administration of his own concerns; while the benefit that might accrue to the inhabitants of Hindostan were not likely to make a very deep impression on his mind. In Mr. Fox's East India bill, the real or probable evils, like the defects of his general character, were manifest to a common understanding; but its real or probable benefits, like the excellencies of his general character, required comprehensive views, penetrating sagacity, and great abilities, to estimate and appreciate. Mr. Fox himself, and his supporters, ardent in pursuing their great scheme, though they anticipated, and, at least, with uncommon ingenuity controverted in parliament,^d the principal objections that were urged; yet they did not sufficiently regard the impression made out of parliament by these objections, until it was too late. Mr. Fox in this as in many other measures, attending to what was great and momentous, overlooked various particulars which, though apparently little, were really important. His enlightened mind valuing the literature for which he himself and many of his supporters and coadjutors were so eminently distinguished, and aware of the importance of the press as a political engine, had secured the ablest contributors to periodical publications.^e

Classes
hostile to
Mr. Fox.

BUT these efforts of genius were not directed to the objects wherein assistance was chiefly wanted: they were addressed to scholars, statesmen, and philosophers, instead of the great mass of the people, among whom an alarm against the coalition was spreading itself so widely. The opposite party, with more dexterous skill, disseminated writings which simplified arguments or allegations to the comprehension of the multitude, and impressed their feelings. In running the race of popularity, the anti-coalitionists, by skilful direction to the goal, surpassed the forcible and energetic movements of the coalitionists deviating from the course. Many of the independent

^d See Burke's speech on chartered rights.
newspapers of the time, and also the Political Herald.

^e See the magazines and

land holders^f, merchants, and manufacturers, partook of the alarm, and tended to increase it through the nation; that great and opulent body, the dissenters, were, with few exceptions, inimical to the coalition, and this their principal scheme. All those who were privately or domestically dependent on the king, attached to his person, and desirous of gratifying his wishes; all who by habit, predilection, or office, were more connected with the splendor of the court than the politics of the cabinet, were inimical to a party which they conceived or knew to be disagreeable to the sovereign. But the principal source of popularity to the anti-coalition party, was the character of its juvenile leader, who was conceived equal to Mr. Fox himself in talents; known to be so much superior in moral habits; free from the imputation of vice or political inconsistency; and presumed, from his character and conduct, more likely to apply with undeviating constancy to public business, and with more steady patriotism to seek the national good, than a personage whose extraordinary abilities might be interrupted or perverted by his foibles and propensities, the connexions and associates which these generated. The character and habits of Mr. Pitt were much more favourable to the promotion of confidence among the moneyed men than those of his opponent, and in his late defence of chartered rights he was regarded as the champion of mercantile corporations, which enhanced his popularity among individual capitalists. There was a class of men distinguished by the title of the king's friends, emanating, according to the whig hypothesis, from the secret influence junto, which during so great a part of the reign had been conceived to exist, and to direct public and more ostensible politicians. To these the Rockingham party, which they considered as a hostile phalanx, was much more disagreeable than the band which after the death of Chatham, was headed by earls Temple and Shelburne. Mr. Pitt, as a member of the Temple party, was much more agreeable to these courtiers than Mr. Fox, member of the whig party. He had not joined the whig admini-

^f A treatise by sir William Pulteney, very vigorously written, was powerfully efficacious in impressing on the public a detestation of the plan, and a dread of its author.

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stration of 1782, and in 1783 had spoken and voted with those that were understood to occupy the greatest share of royal favour. Pleasing and engaging as Mr. Fox's manners are, yet his character is too open, and perhaps too unguarded, for the reserve and caution indispensable at courts, where a Mrs. Masham may overturn a Marlborough. Mr. Pitt resembling Fox in the highest talents for the great politics of the cabinet, somewhat surpassed him in the secondary politics of the court. Though too independent and dignified for the habitual suppleness of a mere instrument of splendor, yet prudent as well as able, he had the address and concealment of a skilful courtier. To this statement of comparative personal virtues, a retrospect of their fathers, allowing the just merit to the one, but attributing unproved demerit to the other, produced, with the multitude, a great additional influence in favour of Mr. Pitt.^g From all these causes, the tide of popularity ran so high in favour of the new ministers, as to render an appeal to the nation desirable to them and hurtful to their adversaries. But such a measure was not immediately practicable with safety to the country; supplies were urgently wanted for the public service, and could not be deferred till the meeting of a new parliament. The majority in opposition could refuse the supplies, in order to retard dissolution. The land tax bill was then pending; the 20th of December, the day after the change of ministry, had been appointed for the third reading; the majority, however, agreed to put off its consideration. On the 22d, the house sat as a *committee on the state of the nation*: a resolution was moved by Mr. Erskine for an address to his majesty, to state the alarming reports of a speedy dissolution; mentioning the territorial and commercial affairs of the India company as requiring their immediate attention; and praying his majesty to suffer them to proceed on the important business recommended to them in his speech from the throne; to hearken to the voice of his faithful commons, and not to the secret advices of persons who might have

^g The *two pair of portraits*, by Mr. Horne Tooke with the greatest pungency and force converge this kind of argument; but in point of justness, resemble the labours of an arbitrator, who debiting one side without allowing any credit, and crediting the other without charging any debit, should publish the result as an award exhibiting a fair balance of accounts.

private interests of their own, separate from the true advantage of the king and his people. His majesty's answer, delivered on the 24th of December, admitted the urgency of the subject stated in their address, and pledged the royal promise, not to interrupt the house, either by prorogation or dissolution. The majority was not satisfied with this answer of the king, which appeared to them to afford no certain prospect that his majesty would long abstain from exerting the prerogative vested in him by the constitution. They therefore proceeded with precautions against this event: by an ACT OF PARLIAMENT, the lords of the treasury were empowered to permit, at discretion, the directors to accept bills from India: the house of commons passed a *resolution* to prohibit the lords of the treasury from accepting any more bills from India, till the company should prove to that house that they had sufficient means for their payments, after having discharged their current demands, and the debt due to the public. The amount of this prohibition was, that the house of commons assumed to itself the power of suspending an act of parliament. On the 26th, the house adjourned to the 12th of January: during the recess, each party was employed in strengthening itself, and in forming its political measures. When parliament was assembled, Mr. Fox moved, that the committee on the state of the nation should be resumed. After several subordinate motions, a resolution was proposed, that, in the present situation of his majesty's dominions, it was peculiarly necessary there should be an administration which had the confidence of that house and the public. In this motion his majesty's name had been omitted. Mr. Dundas, in order to point out the real spirit of the resolution, as well as the actual state of the case; and, that not the confidence of one branch, but the whole legislature was requisite to ministers; proposed an amendment, substituting, instead of the words confidence of *this house and the public*, "confidence of the crown, the parliament, and the people:" the amendment was rejected, and the original resolution was passed. Another proposition was immediately adopted, to the following purport: "that the late changes in his majesty's councils had been preceded by dangerous and universal reports, that the sacred name

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“ of the king had been unconstitutionally used to effect
 “ the deliberations of parliament; and that the appoint-
 “ ments made were accompanied by circumstances new
 “ and extraordinary, and such as did not engage the con-
 “ fidence of that house.” This resolution manifestly refer-
 red to the report concerning earl Temple : it occasioned a
 very warm debate, which contained much personal invective,
 and repeated all the arguments for and against both
 parties : the resolution was carried in the affirmative.

Mr. Pitt's
East India
bill.

ON the 14th of January, Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding the majority in favour of opposition, introduced a bill for the better government and management of the affairs of the East India company. His scheme proposed the appointment of commissioners by his majesty, from the members of his privy council, who should be authorized and empowered from time to time to check, superintend, and control, all acts, operations, and concerns, which related to the civil or military government, or revenues, of the territorial possessions. Two members of the said board should be the chancellor of the exchequer and the secretary for the home department; the board should have access to all the papers of the company; and the court of directors should deliver to the board copies of all the proceedings of both courts of directors and proprietors; copies of all despatches received from the company's servants in India, and the instructions sent and proposed to be sent to India, relating to the civil or military government, or revenues of the British territorial possessions. The court of directors should pay due obedience to the orders of the board, respecting civil and military government and revenue; the board, in a limited time, were to return the copies which were received, with their approbation, or disapprobation, of the proceedings communicated; or proposing amendments if they found them unsatisfactory. The board was fully to state their reasons, and also their farther instructions, to be sent to India without delay. Should the directors conceive any of the orders of the board to be extra-official, in not relating to the civil, military, and financial government of India, to which the bill was limited, they should apply, by petition, to his majesty in council, concerning such injunctions; and the decision of the

council thereon should be final and conclusive. The nomination of the commander in chief should be vested in his majesty, and that officer should always be second in council. The king should also have the power of removing any governor general, president, and members of the councils of any British settlements in India; all vacancies in their offices should be supplied, subject to his majesty's disapprobation, that might be repeated until one was chosen whom he should approve. No order or resolution of any general court of proprietors should have power to revoke or rescind, or affect any proceeding of the court of directors, after his majesty's pleasure should have been signified upon the same. Such are the outlines of Mr. Pitt's scheme for the government of India. A great and leading difference between this project and the plan recently rejected by the lords is, that the former left the charter untouched, and the commercial concerns of this corporation of merchants under the sole management of the proprietors themselves and the directors of their choice. The company itself was so thoroughly convinced of their charter not being wantonly infringed, that they approved,^h as proprietors and directors, both of its principle and regulations. By the former bill, the entire transfer of the company's affairs to commissioners nominated in parliament, and the permanent duration of their authority for a term of four years, had occasioned great alarm, as creating a new power dangerous to the constitution. The object of the present bill was merely control. In supporting his own proposition, Mr. Pitt expressed his high admiration of that part of Mr. Fox's scheme which respected the zemindars, but he disapproved general indiscriminate confiscation. He proposed, therefore, that an inquiry should be instituted for the purpose of restoring such as had been irregularly and unjustly deprived, and that they should be secured against violence in future. These last provisions were not included in the bill which he had prepared for the consideration of the house, but they formed a part of his general ideas for the reformation of India. Mr. Fox argued against this bill, as inadequate

^h See proceedings of the courts of directors and proprietors, in January 1784.

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to the correction of the enormous abuses which pervaded the administration of British Indostan. The bill, by continuing the powers of the court of directors, and rendering them dependent for their existence upon the proprietors, had no tendency to eradicate any mischief, or to obtain any valuable improvement ; the connexion between both and their servants abroad, that had been the source of so many evils, would still continue. The governor general was to have the same powers of internal regulation as before, and which had produced so great and manifold abuses. But this bill provided the remedy of recal : and of what value was this remedy ? Did not all the officers of state, whether political or military, depend upon the governor general ? Would they not regard him therefore as one in whose official existence they were peculiarly interested ? Would they not, if he should choose to be refractory, strengthen his principles of disobedience ? The governor general must be more than man to withstand so potent a temptation, surrounded and fortified by a variety of individuals in every department of life, who owed their existence to him ; it was not the orders of a body of men, however respectable, that were in a great measure unconnected with the country wherein he resided, that could control his conduct. Mr. Pitt's scheme would throw a great mass of patronage into the hands of the crown. It tended (Mr. Fox said) not to remedy any of the evils which had subsisted for so long a time, or to put a period to those barbarities which had stigmatised and rendered infamous the character of Britain in the annals of India. If adopted, the company might, as in former instances, replenish their letters with moral precepts, but our eastern possessions would be irrecoverably lost to this country. To these objections it was replied, that Mr. Pitt's bill had all the efficiency necessary to correct abuses, prevent their recurrence, and improve our interest in India, without infringing the rights of private property, or creating a new power in the empire inconsistent with the established constitution. Acknowledging the defects of the present government of India, it was intended to lodge a principal share of the executive power where it ought to be vested. It showed the utmost tenderness to the privileges of the

company, and would produce that happy and desirable mixed government, which every friend to the immunities of a great commercial association, and every supporter of our free constitution, would cheerfully welcome. Though it attributed new powers to the monarchical branch of our polity, yet were they so circumscribed, that they could not, in the hands of the most abandoned prince, be converted into instruments of mischief and oppression; these arguments did not avail, and Mr. Pitt's bill was rejected by a majority of two hundred and twenty-two to two hundred and fourteen.

is rejected.

MEANWHILE addresses were pouring in from all quarters to the sovereign, to testify the highest satisfaction at the dismissal of the coalition ministry, and the appointment of the administration headed by Mr. Pitt. The coalition party, the more they heard the voice of the public, the more they laboured to retard an event which would be an appeal to the opinion and sentiments of their constituents. While Mr. Pitt's India bill was pending, Mr. Fox proposed to defer the second reading of the mutiny bill until the 23d of February, and thus procure a respite for a month; and the motion was adopted. It was immediately followed by another, which asserted, that the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility, was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the king and his people. In support of this motion, the coalition leaders did not attempt to establish delinquency: the arguments proceeded from an assumed principle, that a minister ought not to continue in office without the support of the house of commons: this was the basis of their reasoning, and unless it was firmly founded, all the superstructure must fall to the ground. If the position was true, its truth was to be ascertained either by positive law, or by general and admitted practice. By the constitution, the king has the power, as chief executive magistrate, of choosing his own officers (unless under specific disqualifications, not imputed in the case in question) for performing the several branches of the executive duties. The house of commons has a right to impeach, on the ground of mal-

Addresses against the coalition party.

Question on dictation to the crown by the commons in the choice of a minister.

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versation in office, any of the ministers; but not to prescribe to the king in his choice of a minister. As the majority of the commons did not attempt to *prove* that they possessed a constitutional right of dictation to the crown respecting the choice of its officers, the weight of their arguments rested entirely on the *authority* of the superior numbers of commoners.

The king,
lords, and
the public
are favour-
able to Mr.
Pitt.

It may be proper to estimate the exact amount of this authority, in order to ascertain how far it was right or wrong, wise or unwise in government, to admit or reject it as 'a rule of conduct, when unsupported by law and precedent. Of the commons, two hundred and five against a hundred and eighty-four, voted that the minister ought not to continue in office, because he was not trusted by the house of commons. The house of lords, on the 4th of February, took this business into consideration; and the earl of Effingham moved two resolutions; the first referring to the proposition of the house of commons, prescribing the restriction of the lords of the treasury from consenting to the acceptance of bills from India; secondly, to the vote of January the 16th, against the continuance of the present ministers in office. His lordship proposed, that the house should resolve, first, that an attempt in any one branch of the legislature to suspend the execution of law, by separately assuming to itself the direction of a discretionary power, was unconstitutional: secondly, that by the known principles of this constitution, the un doubted authority of appointing to the great offices of executive government was solely vested in the king; and that that house had every reason to place the firmest reliance in his majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative. The lords in opposition endeavoured to justify the interference of the house of commons, on the ground of expediency, founded on particular circumstances of the case which the act of parliament could not foresee. It was, they said, intended to prevent the India company from contracting engagements for two millions sterling, to the prejudice of the public, their principal creditors. Lord Thurlow insisted that this was a peremptory order, which the house of commons had no right to issue in contravention of the

law of the land. If he had been a lord of the treasury he would not have obeyed the resolution of the house of commons; and would have refused compliance on this plain principle, that nothing short of an act of parliament, formally passed by the three states of the realm, had the power of suspending any part of the statute or the common law of England. The chief subject of controversy was the second resolution. The supporters of Mr. Fox deprecated the dissension which the proposed interference must excite between the peers and commons; justified the commons on the ground of general expediency; and insisted that the house of commons, by the spirit of the constitution, had a right to control the choice of a minister. The ministerial lords, especially the chancellor, denied the existence of any such right, and challenged its assertors to establish it by proof. In this attempt their arguments not being satisfactory, a majority of a hundred to fifty-three of the peers voted for lord Effingham's resolutions and consequent address. The majority of the peers consisted of almost two to one in favour of the kingly prerogative of choosing his own servants. The majority of the commons, for rendering the exercise of that executive power dependent on the arbitrary will of one branch of the legislature, was only about ten to nine. The nation in general manifested its wishes in favour of the minister chosen by the crown. Thus, if the authority of opinion was to determine whether the present minister should or should not continue in office, (and the house of commons adduced no other argument), there was on the one hand the opinion of a small majority of the house of commons, on the other the opinion of a great majority of the house of peers, and evidently of by far the larger portion of the nation, and the choice of the king. While, however, there was a majority of the house of commons, that majority, be it ever so small, was the house, and no minister could retain his situation thwarted by the house. The king, ministry, and public, saw that the present majority in the house of commons did not represent the opinion, sentiments, and wishes of their constituents. It was resolved not to succumb to dictatorial mandates that could not be enforced: Mr. Pitt,

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on the 18th of February, informed the house that the king had not, in compliance with the resolution of the commons, dismissed his ministers, and that the ministers had not resigned. Mr. Fox, persisting in his assumed principle, contended that by retaining the ministers after the disapprobation of the house had been signified, the crown had degraded the representatives of the people to the lowest insignificance. Mr. Pitt insisted that there was no attempt to degrade the house of commons, or to infringe any of its rights; but merely an endeavour to prevent it from usurping the right of another branch of the legislature. It was apprehended that opposition, finding no other hopes of success, would refuse the supplies: but Mr. Fox, bold and adventurous as he was, appears to have been averse to a measure which would throw the country into such disorder.

Attempt of independent gentlemen to effect an accommodation between the ministerial and opposition parties.

Meeting for that purpose.

Correspondence with the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt.

WHILE the opposite parties were engaged in contentions so detrimental to public business, impartial men desired a coalition which should comprehend the chief talents of both sides, and produce a sacrifice of private competition to the public welfare: retain the abilities of Mr. Pitt and lord Thurlow in the councils of their country, and join with them the abilities of Mr. Fox and lord Loughborough; and disregarding either court predilections or whig confederacies, should choose for the various offices men most qualified and disposed for discharging their respective duties. With this view, a considerable number of independent gentlemen met at the St. Albans tavern on the 26th of January, and drew up an address recommending an union of parties. This being signed by fifty-three members of the house of commons, was presented by a committee to the duke of Portland and to Mr. Pitt. The duke of Portland answered he should be happy in obeying the commands of so respectable a meeting, but that the greatest difficulty to him was Mr. Pitt's continuance in office. Mr. Pitt expressed his readiness to pay attention to the commands of so respectable a meeting, and cooperate with their wishes to form a stronger and more extended administration, if the same could be done consistently with principle and honour. In the farther progress of the discussion, the duke of Portland proposed

as a preliminary step, that Mr. Pitt should resign in compliance with the resolution of the house of commons. Mr. Pitt declared that it was inconsistent with his principles and sentiments to resign his ministerial capacity in the present circumstances. The duke of Portland proposed the same preliminary repeatedly in different forms ; but Mr. Pitt still declared it inadmissible, and the duke of Portland insisted on it as an indispensable step ; the negotiation, therefore, was suspended. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt expressed their sentiments to the house : both appeared impressed with a sense of the benefits that might accrue from an united administration, but neither would relinquish their respective principles. Mr. Fox insisted, that it was unconstitutional in Mr. Pitt to hold his place after such a vote of the house of commons ; that therefore he must resign. Mr. Pitt insisted, that it was not unconstitutional, and would not consent to resign : resignation would be the virtual admission of a control in the house of commons, which he denied them to possess. The reciprocal communications between the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt had been hitherto carried on through the committee at the St. Albans tavern. Still anxiously earnest to compass the desired union, these patriotic members proposed that his grace and the minister should have a conference ; and that his majesty should send a message to the duke desiring that he and Mr. Pitt should have an interview for the sake of forming a new administration. A message was accordingly sent to the duke of Portland, intimating his majesty's earnest desire that his grace should have a personal conference with Mr. Pitt for the purpose of forming a new administration on a wide basis, and on fair and equal terms. Before his grace would agree to the proposed meeting, he required an explanation of the term *equal*. Mr. Pitt replied that a personal conference would best explain specific objects ; but the duke of Portland not being satisfied with this answer, refused to confer, and his refusal put an end to negotiation.

The design
proves
abortive.

THE address for the removal of ministry was presented to the king on the 25th of February. His majesty in reply declared it to be the object nearest his heart, that the

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public affairs should be conducted by a firm, efficient, united and extended administration, entitled to the confidence of his people, and such as might have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy divisions and distractions of this country. He had employed very recent endeavours to unite in the public service, on a fair and equal footing those whose joint efforts he thought the most fitted for producing so happy an effect : his endeavours had failed : he should be happy to embrace every measure most conducive to such an object, but could not perceive it would be forwarded by the dismissal of his present ministers. His majesty observed, that no charge or complaint was suggested by the house against those officers of the crown, whose removal they solicited ; that no specific objection was made to any one or more of his servants ; that great numbers of his subjects had expressed their warmest satisfaction with the late changes made in his councils : in these circumstances, he trusted, his faithful commons would not wish the essential offices of the executive government to be vacated, until there was a prospect that the desired plan of union could be carried into effect. The commons repeated their address in a more detailed form, and with still more urgent solicitation for the removal of ministers. His majesty's reply contained opinions and sentiments of the same important tendency as his former ; and in the same temperate, firm, and dignified spirit, repeated the cogent and unanswerable argument ; " You require, the removal of my ministers, without alleging any charge of delinquency." Finding every attempt unavailing to induce the sovereign to sacrifice his choice of servants highly approved of by his people, to the mere will of the coalition party, unsupported by any constitutional reasoning, Mr. Fox proposed what he termed a representation, but really was a remonstrance to the sovereign ; stating the privileges and power of the house, and the ancient practice of withholding supplies until grievances were redressed ; and explaining the evils that would accrue to the country, if they exercised this right ; that necessity only could justify its exertion ; that such a necessity, arising from his majesty's advisers, did exist ; and that the measures originating with these advisers, were altogether con-

trary to the principles and maxims by which the illustrious house of Hanover had reigned over this free country, in such harmony with the people, such prosperity and glory : for whatever consequences might result from the necessity imposed on the house of commons to assert its own rights, the advisers of the crown were responsible. The commination intimated, in this statement being carried only by a majority of one, opposition did not think it advisable to contend for the refusal of the supplies. Their superiority had been gradually decreasing, and they saw that if they attempted so strong a measure, they would be outvoted, and that the house of commons would at last concur with the majority of the nation. They became more and more sensible of their great and increasing unpopularity ; and from this time, on the 9th of March, they appeared to have considered themselves as conquered. The opposition leaders had proposed, as a preventive of a dissolution, to move a short mutiny bill ; but this design they now relinquished, and suffered the act to pass for the usual term ; and all parties prepared for a speedy dissolution of parliament.

Thus terminated a contest between a powerful confederacy in the house of commons, and the executive government, supported by the confidence which the nation reposed in the talents and character of the principal minister. The coalition party defended the ground which it had assumed, and attacked administration with a force, impetuosity, concert, and perseverance, which must have overborne any minister, who did not unite abilities to see the means of defending a constitutional tenure, skill to apply them, and firmness to persist in maintaining what he conceived to be right against any combination of adversaries. A minister less powerful in reasoning, would have yielded to allegations so confidently urged, to sophistry so plausibly supported, or even to the very authority of such illustrious names. A minister, however endowed with intellectual superiority, unless also resolutely firm, would have rather conceded what he knew to be right, than maintained a contest with so numerous, forcible, and well disciplined a host, though he knew them to be wrong. Without a third advantage, a high degree of estimation

Display of Mr. Pitt's talents and character in resisting such a confederacy of genius and power.

Public estimation of the contending leaders.

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with the public, success might have been uncertain. On the side of Mr. Fox there were consummate ability, intrepid boldness, fortified by a special confederacy. On the side of Mr. Pitt, there was consummate ability and firmness, and unquestioned character, which was fortified by no special combination, but increased, extended, and enlarged that general connexion which wisdom, virtue, and appropriate fame rarely fail to attach to a senator or statesman among an informed, distinguishing, and free people. Mr. Fox, though transcendent in genius, sought power by means which, during the two preceding reigns, had exalted several ministers of no genius. Mr. Pitt secured public confidence, and acquired power, by personal qualities. But every impartial wellwisher to his country, while he rejoices that Britain acquired the executorial services of a Pitt, must no less regret that she lost the executorial services of a Fox.

WHILE the chief attention of parliament had been occupied by these momentous subjects, several matters of subordinate importance were transacted. The receipt tax, meritorious as a financial measure, and productive without being burdensome, was, notwithstanding, very unpopular; and a motion was made for its repeal. Several substitutes were proposed; and among the rest, sir Cecil Wray moved a tax on *maid servants*, which produced laughable strictures rather than any serious consideration. The receipt tax was continued, and new penalties were annexed to enforce the imposts. A committee was appointed for inquiring into illicit practices to defraud the revenue; and Christopher Atkinson, esq. having been convicted of perjury was expelled the house of commons. Previous to the dissolution of parliament, his majesty judged it expedient, in the particular circumstances of the case, to announce his intention of recurring to the sense of the people, and the reasons in which that intention was founded. His speech, as compressing the sentiments, opinions, objects, and motives of our sovereign, respecting the momentous subjects of the narrative just finished, is highly deserving of full citation: it was to the following effect: "My lords and gentlemen, on a full consideration
" of the present situation of affairs, and of the extraor-

The king declares his intention of taking the sense of his people.

“ dinary circumstances which have produced it, I am indu-
 “ ced to put an end to this session of parliament. I feel
 “ it a duty which I owe to the constitution and to the
 “ country, in such a situation, to recur as speedily as pos-
 “ sible to the sense of my people, by calling a new parlia-
 “ ment. I trust that this means will tend to obviate the
 “ mischiefs arising from the unhappy divisions and dis-
 “ tractions which have lately subsisted ; and that the vari-
 “ ous important objects which will require consideration,
 “ may be afterwards proceeded upon with less interrup-
 “ tion, and with happier effect. I can have no other object,
 “ but to preserve the true principles of our free and hap-
 “ py constitution, and to employ the powers intrusted to
 “ me by law for the only end for which they were given,
 “ to the good of my people.” On the 24th of March, Dissolution
 parliament was prorogued, and the next evening it was
 dissolved by proclamation.

Thus ended, in its fourth year, a parliament, and cha-
racter of
this parlia-
ment.
 which few assemblies either witnessed more changes in
 the executive administration, or exhibited a greater change
 of political character. The members had been elected at
 a season, when the recent disturbances of 1780 repressed
 the spirit of opposition to government, from the appre-
 hension, that if suffered to prevail, it might generate a
 discontent, eventually productive of similar outrages ; and
 at a time when the sanguine hopes from unusual success
 obliterated former miscarriages. Disappointed expecta-
 tion soon revived dissatisfaction, and the parliament which
 had been most devoted to lord North, became eager and
 active to drive him from his ministerial situation. The
 administration of lord North had been followed by the
 appointment of a set of men, from whom many of their
 countrymen expected the nation would derive singular
 benefit ; but these hopes were overturned almost as soon
 as they were raised : the untimely death of lord Rock-
 ingham, and the unhappy misunderstandings that succeed-
 ed, speedily demolished the fabric. The administration
 of lord Shelburne passed almost entirely during the recess
 of parliament. It fell unfortunately to his lot to nego-
 tiate the terms of the general peace, which was signed at
 Versailles on the 20th of January 1783. Upon the assem-

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bling of parliament, this measure was the first object of their deliberations, and was judged to deserve a strong and severe censure. Those who had been most hostile at the commencement of parliament, now became most closely united. The professed friends of prerogative, and professed champions of the people, formed a coalition, which in the third session of parliament established the fourth ministry. An imputed pursuit of perpetual dominion, in eight months, drove this party from power; and an early period of the fourth session saw a fifth ministry. Half of the fourth year was not passed when this body was dissolved. Having begun with the most obsequious assent to every requisition of ministers, it ended with questioning the most necessary prerogatives of the crown. Its character being stamped by its successive leaders, for two sessions it exhibited the dexterous but temporary expedients, the indecisive policy and indulgent profusion of lord North. In its third year, before the two parties were fully cemented and ability assumed its native superiority, it displayed a mixture of temporising and decisive politics. In its fourth year, the supremacy of Mr. Fox being now established, its measures bore the stamp of the energy, promptness, decision, and adventurous boldness of that eminent statesman.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

MAY 17 1940



Mason.

